

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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CONTENTS.

Palmistry or Otherwise	97-104	Jottings	107
Liverpool Lyceum	98	Edison's Conception of Matter	109
Rev. H. R. Haweis on Mill	98	A Spiritual Diary	109
Extraordinary Phenomena	103	"Great Names"	110
Subtle Conditions	104	Beyond the Grave	110
"The Gift of D. D. Home"	105	Exploration of Lives	110
Dr. Anna Kingsford	106	Antecedent Existence	111
Planchette Writing	106	Haunting	111
The Divining Rod	107	Society Work	112

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

"PALMISTRY OR OTHERWISE."*

It is not without some modest sense of incapacity that I venture to treat a book which deals with a subject of which I am profoundly ignorant. It is desirable that a reviewer should appraise his own stock of knowledge, and I frankly confess that I have none. That being so, I set myself to work to read this lady's book, and then, by a happy inspiration, I went to see her, and offered myself as a "vile body" on which she might experiment. She was so good as to do so, and I am prepared at once to admit that her success was most remarkable. I never knew that I carried about with me such a record of character. It was to me a revelation. As we had never met before, it must be that the delineation of character from my hand was what it professed to be, a reading of what Nature had written down as the resultant of the acts and habits of my daily life. It seems to me that the recording angel provides a number of records against us all: for some of my friends prophesy over me astrologically: some read my record in my hands: some treat me phrenologically: some pry into my face and indicate that I am physiognomically good, bad, or indifferent. Parts, I suppose, of one gigantic whole, and so correlated with God's Universe in all its ramifications.

I asked Mrs. Cotton to be so good as to reply to a few questions, and she readily acceded. For about a dozen years she has paid attention to this subject. An inclination, a bent, led her to make it the study of her life; in effect, the practical business of life. She is "occult" generally; a Theosophist, a student of Graphology, and founded in all she does on Astrology as the ruling and central principle on which she relies. It cannot be, in her philosophy, that any unit is detached from the system of which it forms a part. The relation of the Microcosm to the Macrocosm is absolute. We cannot, if we would, separate ourselves from our surroundings, and we write our history day by day in an indelible record. There is no need of any day-book or ledger. The story of each human life is automatically recorded. That is perhaps a view of "judgment" which might profitably be considered by some religionists. They might think with advantage how absolutely such a view of facts disposes of some theories that have found a place in men's fancies. They might possibly arrive at the conclusion that no one can answer for his brother, or bear his burden, or do more than help him, as all of us can, with tenderness and love and pity.

* *Palmistry and its Practical Uses.* By LOUISE COTTON. (George Redway, York-street, Covent Garden.)

I asked Mrs. Cotton whether there entered into her delineations anything of Clairvoyance. She was not sure. She could not say that she was aware of it, but I found her rather disposed to recognise such a possibility. It is none the less true that she proceeds by rigid rules, and gives no rein to fancy. She "reads" the hand according to fixed rule; such and such "mounts," lines, and configurations mean so much. They are interpreted according to canons laid down by Cheirosophists, and there they are. You may take them or leave them. But, as my experience goes, you will find them substantially true: perhaps more true than most other alleged truths that you run against in your life. Whether the spirit enters into the diagnosis or not—and of course it does, for it is the self, the real, true intelligence—is not a question that is worth discussion. Mrs. Cotton finds, as might be expected, that she reads the hands of some who consult her more easily and successfully than those of others. That is to be anticipated, and tends to the belief that psychical gifts are in operation. But, be this as it may, the hand is read according to fixed rules.

What are these rules? I am not competent to state them. But are they not written in the little book which Mr. Redway will cheerfully supply to anyone who thirsts for knowledge? Desbarolles (*Les Mystères de la Main*) is the father of this science. I should say that Mrs. Cotton is one of its most accomplished exponents. I went to her a perfect stranger. In what she sent me as a delineation of character there were thirty-six characteristics—the term being used to denote peculiarities of character—and fifty-six events in the life. It is almost incredible, and yet quite literally true that out of these ninety-two tangible points—susceptible of verification—only a very small percentage—not ten at the outside—were inaccurate. The remainder were strikingly true; and, in saying this, I desire to state that I exclude from my estimate anything that was at all vague or uncertain in statement. I am disposed to think that is a very striking record. I have been to various people—mediums, seers, and others—and they have prophesied over me with disastrous results. I got plenty of "M.A. (Oxon.)" and nothing of myself. They did not know anything about me; that was obvious. Their seeing was not clear seeing. They gazed at me through a glass darkly. Here was the very reverse. No single item of my public life was touched on; and my private life, of which a very few intimate friends alone know anything at all, was touched on by someone who evidently was not guessing, but who knew.

In the past two years Mrs. Cotton has read 560 hands, and, outside of her own work, in various assemblies, some 500 more. That is a revelation, I fancy, to most of my readers. Who are the people who are so interested in this queer bit of Occultism that they go in these numbers to pry into futurity? Well, there are not many people nowadays who are *not* interested in these subjects. If we could set up a dozen mediums at Charing Cross, warranted to produce even the most elementary phenomena, they would be

engaged all day long. The difficulty is to get them. The demand vastly exceeds the supply. And this will be the case until we take the ordinary and reasonable steps which we take in regulating supply in answer to demand in matters of daily life.

A question arises in the mind as to this Palmistry. If the character and the life are written on the hand, what are we to say about Fatalism? Can one run counter to the indications? Mrs. Cotton says broadly that we cannot: but she considers that the lines, mounts, and general indications may be modified, and the changed character be written on the hand. I take it, for example, that a man who had led a vicious life up to a certain year, and had come under reforming influences then, would show the change in that record of the hand. I take it also that a man who "went to the bad" would write his record also. It does seem to me a matter of the very highest import, if it be true, that the acts and habits of a man's daily life find an imperishable record on his own body, to which "one who knows" can refer and read there what is written. This is judgment indeed.

LIVERPOOL PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

SALE OF WORK.—On Tuesday, February 18th, a most successful sale of work was held by the Liverpool Progressive Lyceum, at Daulby Hall, Liverpool. The present Lyceum was started on Sunday, October 6th last, a previous attempt in the same direction having proved abortive. A certain amount of indebtedness having been incurred by the present management, in the procuring of the necessary outfit of books, manuals, banners, badges, &c., the Guardian, Miss Florence Morse, suggested that a sale of work be held to raise funds to remove the debt, and, if enough were left, to further provide the Lyceum with a lending library, &c. The members agreeing, the above-named young lady was appointed secretary to the committee, and in response to the circular she issued, of which several kind and much-appreciated notices appeared in "LIGHT," a very large quantity of articles—the useful and the beautiful combined—poured in to the committee. Among the more noticeable contributors were Mrs. Everitt, Mrs. Britten, Mrs. Hamarborn, Mrs. Mellon, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Goldsbrough, Miss Kersey, Miss Bacon; Mr. Kitson, Mr. Wallis, Mr. J. Lamont, and Mr. Cooper, representative workers in the cause; also Mr. Parkinson, who kindly contributed the loan of the handsome double stalls and their decorations, used for the display of the work. During the evening a vocal and instrumental concert was given by the children of the Lyceum, under the direction of Mrs. Chiswell, the musical directress of the school, the performers being the Misses Chiswell, Jennings, Love, and Morris, and the Masters Stretton, Chiswell, and Cooper, and Mr. Redhead. The stalls were presided over by Mesdames Chiswell, Thacker, Leckie, Morse, and Catlow, assisted by the Misses Kerman, Cooper, Nevatt, Russell, and Morse. The refreshment stall was superintended by Mesdames Nock and Carroll, and Miss Hodge.

The sale was a great success, far exceeding the modest expectations of its promoters, the result at the close exceeding £28, with various unsettled accounts to be hereafter included. The proceedings were opened by Mr. J. J. Morse, in a brief and appropriate speech, and during the evening Mr. S. S. Chiswell, the Conductor of the Lyceum, addressed the company, expressing alike the pleasure and surprise of all concerned at the splendid success that had crowned their efforts, and heartily thanking everyone who had contributed goods, money, or assistance. The use of the hall was generously granted free of charge by the Liverpool Psychological Society.

J. J. M.

CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.—A society with the above name has been founded, and meets in the drawing-room of the St. Nicholas Club, 81A, Queen Victoria-street, E.C. (a short walk from the Mansion House Station), on Thursday afternoons at 4.15 o'clock. The meetings extend from February 6th to April 30th, and the list of speakers includes Mrs. Besant, Mr. Farquhar, Mr. Chainey, and Mr. Stainton-Moses. The society expressly disclaims any desire to occupy ground already covered by existing bodies, and all information may be had from the Rev. G. W. Allen, 3, Featherstone-buildings, High Holborn, W.C. Our hearty good wishes are with the venture.

REV. H. R. HAWEIS

ON

JOHN STUART MILL'S RELIGION.

VERBATIM REPORT OF A SERMON PREACHED AT ST. JAMES'S, WESTMORELAND-STREET, MARYLEBONE.

This is an age of unsettled religious opinion. You may be vaguely satisfied that there is One above and beyond us Who knows what is best—that we are all being dealt with and disciplined and led on by a Divine purpose—and yet you may feel your religious opinions and those of the age unsettled. If you think of the people whom you know personally, if you read the current books and magazines, or if you consider the very diversity of church and chapel teaching, you will have to admit that theological opinion is unsettled.

Well, the world as regards religion may be divided into three sections. Those who think a little, those who think a great deal, and those who accept whatever they have been taught and do not think at all about their religion—and the largest number of even so-called religious people belong to the last class; they seem content with their creed and catechism, and are very much surprised that others who think more or less about religion should ever have any religious difficulties at all.

I have had many religious difficulties; I do not mean to say that I have cleared them all up, I do not suppose that any of us will ever be able to do that, but in all my earthly strivings after truth I have observed one principle, and that is not to be particular as to where I get my help from. It does not matter to me where flashes of truth and gleams of peace come from as long as they come. And I notice now, without surprise, that very often I do not get truth and peace from the accredited religious teachers and from the current religious books and sermons, but sometimes out of a newspaper article, and sometimes out of a new book or the sayings of some philosophical writer with whom I may not altogether agree in other matters. What is the mint to me if the metal rings true?—nothing; and I find—Christ and the Bible excepted—on the whole I have gained most religious help and comfort from the writings and sayings of those with whom I have most radical and manifold differences.

Now, these remarks occurred to me when I thought of speaking to you concerning John Stuart Mill and his religious opinions. John Stuart Mill some years ago was a name in all mouths. Many people did not know much about him, vast numbers had never read a line of his writings; at the same time, his name was a word to conjure with, because everyone felt, in that indescribable manner in which the presence of a great thinker and a pure spirit is felt throughout the land, that he was a man of profound thought, vast knowledge and reading, keen powers of observation, and incorruptible integrity. He lived the life very much of a hermit and a philosopher; he wrote to himself, as it were, and he thought to himself, but he always wrote and thought in the presence of an immense, intelligent, and sympathetic public, the public gathered out of all nations, and climates, and ages, who love the truth because they feel that the truth alone can make them free. Latterly he entered more into public life in England, and even had for a short time a seat in Parliament; he wrote on politics, and on political economy, upon logic, upon utilitarianism; and he wrote two very remarkable little books, which are very cheap and are now in everybody's hands, or may be, on *Liberty* and on *Representative Government*. So strong was the feeling about this man, his wisdom, and his intellectual power, that he was forced from the seclusion of the study in the last years of his life and returned as member of Parliament for Westminster, at a time when the large number of electors knew nothing whatever about him or his special opinions. He was merely a name, and he was returned on the strength of certain clever young men, who kept telling the people that John Stuart Mill was a great and good man, and a mighty thinker.

But there was that about Mill which, when you saw him, and many of you may have seen him, impressed you with the sense of a man who lived very much above the usual prejudices of the age. He won confidence by his mild, his firm inflexibility, his deep feeling, and imperturbable temperance of thought, and yet everyone was aware of a mighty underlying strength. The House of Commons was not a sphere altogether congenial to Mill any more than the hustings; but he went to the hustings and he went to the House because he felt that, when summoned, it was his duty to go. All his life he had been an ardent advocate of social and political reform, and he served the people

with sincerity. His eye was single and his whole body full of light. Mr. Gladstone always said of Mill that he was "The saint of the Liberal party." I am not going further into this man's character to-night; time would fail me. I have chosen one of his least read, but most interesting, works for discussion this evening.

The three *Essays on Religion* are very remarkable. I do not agree with them. There is much that is suggestive, and much that I do agree with; but they are remarkable and useful for my purpose to-night, because we have in them what can be said about the great problems of human life and religion by a keen logical thinker like Mill. Now, this is an age in which we are all asking what can be said by science and reason for religion, for God, for the soul, for Christ, for revelation, for miracles. We desire once for all to hold up our beliefs in the clear, dry light of Reason, because we feel quite sure that in the long run no religion will stand which is not agreeable to human reason and in accord with true science; for science discovers, and reason arranges and explains those facts which God has permitted to be true in nature, and which, therefore, can never really be at variance with any other kind of truth, either in Reason or Religion. It was because the religion of Jesus Christ appeared so completely agreeable to human nature and human reason that it was accepted, it is because the religion of Christ has been more or less distorted and not represented as it ought to be in a manner congenial to the wants of the succeeding ages that it has come into disrepute; it is not Christ that has come into disrepute, it is those who have not known what to do with that infinitely flexible adaptive Divine life and teaching. Alas! forever and forever Jesus Christ is being wounded in the house of His friends.

Now, there are three great heads I thought of to-night, upon which I would speak to you. First, WHAT IS THIS UNIVERSE? Here you are in this mighty world, with all the stars above you, and the human soul is always asking, WHAT IS THIS UNIVERSE? Where does it come from? We do not want mere fancies; we want to be told what may be known.

Then, secondly, WHAT IS GOD? We do not want dreams, but what can be said by Reason for the existence of an Intelligent and All-wise, All-powerful, All-loving God.

We want to know, thirdly, what we poor creatures are intended for—we who are crawling like infinitesimal mites in a cheese on the surface of the globe. What are we? What are our duties? What is our destiny? What is our place in the universe? What is our duty to man, and what is our relation to God, if there be a God?

Now, these three questions are dealt with in this book, *Essays on Religion*, which deals with NATURE, with UTILITY, with THEISM, and the argument from design.

You cannot say that these are uninteresting or unimportant questions; you cannot say that the Christian pulpit is commonly prepared to deal with them as it ought or does deal with them. The pulpit of to-day generally glides over all difficulties, contents itself with repeating eternally goody-goody truisms, or repeating what has been taught by authority, often words which once were living, but now are dying or dead, upholding forms and doctrines which once were helpful to the human spirit, but which now have to be made alive again or relegated to the limbo of things useless and forgotten. "Our creeds," says Mill in one place, "do nothing for us but stand over the soul like sentinels to keep it empty."

The great thoughts of God, and the Soul, and Immortality, and Duty all have to be re-stated, the great problems all have to be re-discussed; but the pulpit, as far as I have observed, is commonly the pulpit of Gallio, and cares for none of these things, simply repeating parrot-like the kind of things which were wanted in the year 1500 or 1700, but quite forgetting to notice or originate the kind of statements which are wanted by the men of 1890. That is why I take up a book like John Stuart Mill's, and I ask what it has to say in answer to this first question, WHAT IS THE UNIVERSE?

Now, what is the usual answer to that question? The usual answer is this. All this Universe or Nature, the sum total of phenomena and their causes—our world including man—was made by God Almighty out of nothing. Now, is that satisfactory? Does it convey any meaning to your mind? It does not convey any meaning at all to my mind. It is unthinkable that all this should have been made out of nothing; because then you have to ask, Who, then, made the maker, God Almighty? The answer to that is, No one made God Almighty; He was self-created. But, if He did not exist before He created Him-

self, how could He have come into existence? how could He, being in existence, make anything at all out of nothing? You see these are unthinkable thoughts. You cannot attach any meaning to them; they are as Hamlet says, "Words, words, words." Now, what does John Stuart Mill say? He says, look with reason and science upon this universe. We are obliged to say that there is no evidence that God Almighty made all this out of nothing. The only solid ground is this: that whilst a beginning is just as unthinkable as no beginning, yet here we have as a fact matter and force; and that these always, so far as we can make out, remain the same. There is the same quantity of matter and force in the universe: that is one of the solid facts which science has given us. There is no evidence that this ever was otherwise than it is; therefore, though the how and the why be unthinkable, yet we are driven upon the assumption that matter and force have always been. Yet we cannot imagine either as having been created out of nothing. Here is the most solid and palpable of things: which as far as thought can travel always was.

Secondly, there is a system working in matter. Force travels one way; matter obeys laws instead of being lawless; so we get order instead of chaos. *Result—the higher is developed out of the lower.* You get an ascending scale of life, you get senseless things gradually rising in the scale of being. There is a gradual progressive plan in nature. You have not only matter and force, but you have a certain conception impressed upon matter and force; they operate within what looks like a preconceived frame-work, the higher rises out of the lower, and as this wonderful creation goes on worlds are evolved, then covered with vegetation, then with reptile life, then you get the seas teeming with fishes, and then animals thronging the woods and lands, and afterwards rising in the scale of creation until they culminate in the crowned animal, man.

No doubt that is solid fact; we know that and can rest upon it.

Now, we go on to mental facts. At last there comes what is called mind. Is mind, thought, the brain power, when you come to the high animal, man, developed out of the lower forms? Is mind cerebrated? just as food is assimilated to build up tissue. Science shies a little at that; the philosophers do not quite see their way to saying mind is a form of matter. Mill does not see his way to declare positively that mind is actually produced by matter through a series of unconscious processes. He says that all we know of mind is that it occurs in connection with matter as far as our observation goes, but there is nothing to prove that it came from matter, or cannot exist apart from matter, or will be at death dispersed and resolved into matter; there is nothing to prove that it is not thus dissoluble, but then there is nothing to prove that it is. You have to deal then with this fact of mind.

Well, in this universe what do you find? You find a plan, a plan impressed upon matter and force, what you call the plan of nature, no doubt. That is a solid fact, and from that solid fact you certainly get a hint of mind, not man's mind, but something like mind which preceded man, which lies not at the top of creation—taking man to be the top—but at the root and foundation of all creation. It is not *certain* that the plan of nature, so Mill tells us, means that there is a sovereign will at the foundation, and so that intelligence is involved in the laws of nature. It is not *certain*; but what he says is this, "That there is a large balance, on purely logical and scientific grounds, of *probability in favour of the universe being governed by a sovereign will.*"

Now, we have answered, according to our pulpit limits and so far as is needful for our purpose to-night, the first question, WHAT IS THE UNIVERSE? Looking at it from the authoritative point of view, Revelation, Inspiration, or Divine authority, tradition may have something to say, no doubt; but Mill's view is to take the facts as they come before us and deal with them from the standpoint of reason and science; and the solid ground is that the universe is matter and force, and that in its operations a plan is revealed evolving higher out of lower, and that when we contemplate that plan we find a hint and a possibility, and even "a balance of probability" in favour of that plan betraying a sovereign will in the universe.

So far then I think you may rest upon this conclusion because it is Mill's, and if Mill is anything he is a severe logician.

Now, secondly, WHAT IS GOD? Does He exist? Does any sovereign will exist? According to the reason shall we ask it humbly and reverently as seekers after truth?

Well, what is the usual answer to the question, What is God? This: GOD IS THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR, God is the sovereign

will and origin and foundation of all the correlated phenomena, and the causes of nature; GOD IS OMNIPOTENT, or all-powerful; GOD, this ALL-WISE, ALL-KNOWING GOD, this sovereign will, this mysterious Personality, is all goodness and all love. That is the usual answer to the question, WHAT IS GOD?

Again, what does Mill say from the standpoint of Reason and Science? He says, You cannot from Reason or Science prove that there is a God, i.e., prove the existence of such a sovereign will as you affirm. He *may* exist; there is a probability from the reason pure and simple that He does exist; there is further a possibility, even a high probability, when you notice the traces, though short of conclusive traces exist, of design in nature, adaptation in nature, drawn out in the argument from design,—there is a high probability that He Whom you call the Almighty One is also Intelligent, the fountain of intelligence; but it is not proved.

Mill denies that by contemplating nature you can logically prove the existence of an Intelligent Being. He says, merely, there is scientifically a high probability.

Then as to His being All-wise. Questions will arise, Why did He not make this human body to last a little longer? Why does it get so soon out of order? Could it not have been made better by an All-wise Being? Are there not hints in nature of grave deficiencies? Why has development and amelioration been so long and painful? Why so slow if all is ordered by an All-wise Being?

These are questions which come into the mind and force themselves upon even children when we speak of an All-wise Being.

Lastly, with reference to the goodness of God. Mill says, How do you reconcile the goodness and the love of God with the injustice and cruelties that exist, involved in the very laws of nature?

Look at the world and then tell me that this world was designed, and made, and organised by a good and loving as well as an All-powerful and All-wise God.

Look at human society—nay, we will not look at human society. You may say that man is to blame for all the evils of human society. It is not so—but were it ever so—still there are evil, pain, wretchedness, awful misery, injustice, and horror in nature itself.

I think one of the most appalling indictments of nature, which makes it so hard for us to believe that this world is made by a good and loving, as well as an all-powerful, God, is the summing up of the evidence on the other side in these terrible words of Mill.

In sober truth, nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's every-day performances. Killing, the most criminal act recognised by human laws, nature does once to every being that lives; and in a large proportion of cases, after protracted tortures such as only the greatest monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their living fellow creatures.

Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this nature does with the most supercilious disregard, both of mercy and of justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst; upon those who are engaged in the highest and worthiest enterprises, and often as the direct consequence of the noblest acts; and it might also be imagined as a punishment for them.

A single hurricane destroys the hopes of a season; a flight of locusts or an inundation desolates a district; a trifling chemical change in an edible root starves a million of people. The waves of the sea, like banditti, seize and appropriate the wealth of the rich and the little all of the poor with the same accompaniments of stripping, wounding, and killing as their human antitypes. Everything, in short, which the worst men commit, either against life or property, is perpetrated on a larger scale by natural agents. Nature has Noyades more fatal than those of Carrier; her explosions of firedamp are as destructive as human artillery; her plague and cholera far surpass the poison cups of the Borgias. Even the love of "order," which is thought to be a following of the ways of Nature, is, in fact, a contradiction of them. All which people are accustomed to deprecate as "disorder" and its consequences is precisely a counterpart of nature's ways. Anarchy and the Reign of Terror are overmatched in injustice, ruin, and death by a hurricane and a pestilence.*

And so on.

Now, what has Mill to add to that? Let us say our Credo, *I believe in God as All-good, All-powerful, All-wise.* But how

can we possibly believe that He is a good and loving God, when nature is constituted in such a manner as we well know it is, and as Mill has described? And what is Mill's suggestive reply? He says, the only admissible way in face of facts, of holding that God is all-loving and all-good, and that He means the happiness and welfare of His creatures, is to suppose that there is something in matter and force in its very nature, or in the material with which He has to deal, something which is intractable, and which the good God has yet to work with, because matter and force are eternal facts, and the only possible way of harmonising the goodness and the love of God with the horrible constitution of nature is to assume that in the nature of things it was not possible for goodness at once to overcome all that was horrible and bad in matter and force, that it was an intractable material which might be dealt with and brought under by degrees and by processes, but not *all at once*.

There must, in other words, be some mysterious limitation to the omnipotence, the all-power of the good and loving God.

Now, do you think this is any derogation from the dignity of the good and loving God? Put it in this way (I am not condensing Mill now—the comments are mine):—

You say it is blasphemy to affirm that God is not all-powerful. He can will, or cause to be, anything, anyhow, anywhere. Well, now, can you imagine that God, however desirable it would be, could make two and two make five? Could Omnipotence do that? Why not? Because it is in the nature of things, i.e., of numbers, that two and two should make four.

Put the case. It might conceivably be an absolute calamity that two and two should only make four. Supposing there were five men on a desert island, and that two of these had two loaves, barely sufficient, and two others had two loaves, also barely sufficient, and these four loaves were barely sufficient for the four men, it would be love and mercy for Omnipotence to cause that two and two should make five loaves all of the same size. But it could not be done. Why? There is a limit, and that limit is involved in the very law of numbers, in the very constitution of mind. Or, supposing the whole of Europe were ruled over by a mighty potentate who had not only power over the laws of the land, but also had great powers, though not absolute, over the laws of nature; but supposing there were influences connected with the Gulf Stream and the Polar regions which acted at times very prejudicially upon the coasts of Europe, and supposing these influences were outside the range of this great and good Governor, would you consider it contrary to, or derogatory to, his goodness and his love, or any reason why we should cease to believe in, and to love, and to worship him—especially if there were signs that even the Gulf Stream was beginning to yield to his influence, although he could not all at once control certain forces involved in the present constitution of nature?

Similarly, what Mill assumes is this, that there is something intractable about nature, something mysterious, a certain law of necessity analogous to the law of numbers, or to a rule of imperfect subjection which makes it impossible for the Almighty to do at once certain things which we might imagine it to be better could they possibly be done. These are not new thoughts, they are old world thoughts—Attic Greek thoughts, Gnostic Greek thoughts, Apostolic Pauline thoughts, as well as Mill's, or mine, or yours. The Athenian meant this when he spoke of an Ananke or necessity above the gods; the Gnostic when he ascribed the creation of this world to One All-powerful in comparison with anything we can conceive of in power, but not absolutely all-powerful at present and all at once; and Paul recognised the law of imperfect subjection for which Mill would contend when he says, "He must reign till He has put all things under Him—but this corruption must put on incorruption, and mortality must put on immortality before that which is written can come to pass—Death is swallowed up in victory." Note, by the way, this theology is quite distinct from the Ahriman and Ormuzd theology, the dual good and evil wills struggling. We admit but one Intelligent, All-wise, All-good will in the universe—yet something short of an impossible All-power—something, as Paul says, "lets and hinders" the Divine purpose.

And this, says Mill, this limitation is the only thing which enables us to believe in the perfect wisdom and the perfect goodness of God. It is what Leibnitz, that great philosopher and thinker, means when he says, that this is *not* the best imaginable world, but we believe it is the best possible world.

* *Essays on Religion*, pp. 20-30.

Give reins to the imagination, and you might easily set to rights a great deal of nature; you might with a sweep abolish the cruelties and horrors involved in those laws by which animals devour and torture one another, fearful hurricanes rage, reckless of life, and property, and happiness, fire-damp explodes inopportunely, &c.; you might make imaginably a better world, but perhaps this is the best possible world under the circumstances.

Slowly better is being evolved from the worst; slowly the evil is being put to flight; slowly the intractable laws of matter, moral evil, and physical evil are being got under, or rather set to counteract each other; there is One mightier Who is striving with opposing elements and Who will subdue them, Who is subduing them. But all at once, and in a moment? No. That cannot be.

Hence we emerge into something like light and sunshine again. The cruelties of nature are not to be attributed to God; the injustice of nature, and all those things in nature which, if we imitate her, we should be monstrous criminals—all those things are no parts of God's system, and they exist only on account of this strange, mysterious limitation which prevents goodness from triumphing all at once, but cannot finally prevent it.

But we need place no limitation to the Wisdom and Love which are dealing with this strange and mixed and confused conglomeration of physical and moral forces.

Now to the last question, WHAT IS MAN'S PLACE? What his duty and his destiny? You may have often heard the phrase, "*Living according to nature*," that it is *right* to live according to nature, to imitate nature.

Now, what does Mill say to that? He says it is *wrong* to live according to nature, to imitate nature. If you begin to imitate nature you will very soon be hanged by the neck until you be dead. If you begin to imitate nature you will do acts of monstrous injustice and cruelty, and you will soon be locked up in prison. If you begin to imitate nature you will speedily be ostracised as a monster in human form.

What do we mean by a monster? We mean nature. Monsters are to be found in nature, and when a man acts as natural monsters act we know that he is very soon suppressed or cancelled. Therefore you must not live according to nature.

"But," you say, perhaps, with Butler in the three sermons on Human Nature, "there is a higher nature and a lower nature." Just so; but it is still true that you must not imitate nature. God could never have intended you to go to nature to learn your lessons of life. No; you have to live according to grace, not according to nature. If you like to call grace the higher nature—if you take the words "higher nature" to mean that ideal of moral goodness which you have written in the fleshly tablets of your heart, which you reflect from the image of Christ Jesus, which you attribute to God in His perfection of wisdom, and goodness, and love—if you like to call *that* nature, very well. But it is a misnomer. It is not nature; it is just what is contrary to nature, even to human nature. All man's goodness comes not by imitating nature, but by taking heed to nature, studying nature, deciding what he will do with nature, selecting what he will imitate, what he will improve, and what he will abolish or suppress.

And as man's moral idea which he gets from the spirit, from the mind, if you will, from God himself prevails, as he rises in the scale of being and well-being, nature herself begins to assume a very different form.

See what man will do with nature when he takes a wilderness and plants it over with fair flowers and fruitful trees. He does not transcend the laws of nature, but just prevents nature from doing what she would if she were left to herself, growing all over with brambles for snakes and poisonous things to live in and things unfruitful for man. He does what God Himself is said to do when He interposes. He uses the various sides of nature, taking heed by the study of them to control one part by another. He does it by a higher intelligential and moral law.

What is man's place in nature? Great, noble, inspiring is his place. He must look to the Divine operation, and he must imitate *that*.

His mission is to co-operate with the good in subduing nature, within and without himself, in controlling and mending nature, and in building up something better than what he finds there.

You are put into the world, then, not to imitate nature and the beasts, or be led by your instincts, but to command nature's forces, and not allow her forces to command you; to command

your instincts, not to allow your instincts to command or run away with you. Your destiny is to be a fellow worker with God.

Now for a moment substitute for Mill's probability, certainty that there is a God, Who is intelligent, wise, and good, and then it is clear what your plain duty and glorious destiny is—you are called upon to struggle with Him side by side, to put down the evil that is in the world, physical, mental, and moral.

That would, indeed, be a satisfactory answer to the question, WHAT IS MAN, WHAT IS HIS DUTY, HIS DESTINY, HIS PLACE IN NATURE?

But, my friends, behold how sad, after all, is the Gospel according to John Stuart Mill. You see at a glance how valuable and how solid it is in places; and yet you see how sad it is, because over all Mill writes "perhaps," he writes "possible," "probable," "not proven." All that is solid and proven is that there is matter and force and a plan in it. It is not scientifically proved that this plan indicates a really intelligent sovereign ruler. It is not proved that He is wise or that He is good. It is not certain, therefore, that man can be a fellow worker with one who may possibly not even exist. It is a possibility, it is a probability, and it may be a devout hope. But Mill leaves us just here.

Just two steps further in this direction. What has Mill to say about miracles? About Divine interpositions and the evidences of a spiritual world, he leaves us just in the same position.

Define your term miracle. Of course if by miracle you mean something which comes from no cause whatever, I do not acknowledge such a thing as possible in any way. By miracle we usually mean that which happens without apparent cause, or contrary to known causes. We do not say that a miracle is that which has no efficient cause; we say it is that which has no apparent cause. We do not say that a miracle is that which happens contrary to all laws; but only contrary to known laws. There may be laws that we have no knowledge of, which control such things as miracles. An abnormal phenomenon may really arise from laws at work which are not apparent to us. And so with miraculous phenomena, visions, apparitions, prophetic dreams of all kinds, miraculous healings—these things, if they ever occur, may be due to unknown laws, but still to divinely natural laws. What does Mill say about it? He says something very comforting when you consider that it is the deliverance of a severe logician. He says there is nothing unscientific in a miracle in that sense of the word, because it merely means that God controls one law by another law. You may not know how He does it; you may not know what law it is which acts upon another law. This book by a natural law falls, but by another law I interpose my hand and arrest its fall. The natural thing is for the book to fall, but I counteract the natural order of events by merely bringing in one law to arrest another. It is no miracle at all, because we are acquainted with both processes—one law, and the other law which suspends it. And if we knew more of the laws of nature we should see that abnormal phenomena and strange things which really happen, but which we are inclined to deny, might be of a similar nature. So Mill says if you could *prove* miracles of that kind—if you could prove miraculous cures, the appearance of the dead, messages from another world, divine interposition, there is nothing scientifically impossible in miracles—it is merely a matter of evidence. But discouragement comes in here, he says *there is no evidence for these things at all*. There I am in direct conflict with him, and hundreds and thousands of people who are not complete fools are also in direct conflict with him. At the same time Mill has a right to his own opinions, and he says in this sweeping way, "*You never had a proof of anything of this kind, therefore miracles have never as far as we know happened at all*." But he admits that if you could prove the event there is nothing unscientific in miracles, in interpositions. For just as a man interposes and controls one law of nature by another, so a sovereign will in the universe might control one law of nature by another and produce very remarkable results.

Then what has Mill to say about the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL—SURVIVAL? Very much the same kind of thing. He says there is no proof. You may say "All things in nature die; why not the soul of man?" But Mill, with his singular candour, adds: "Yes, it is perfectly true that all things in nature die—the leaf dies, the body dies, all things change and pass away, therefore you may say, *Why should not the soul die?* But then why *should* it die? Particularly when it is so utterly different from all these things which you say die. It is not of the same kind. The mind, thought, is quite different from the material forms which

always decay. Therefore it is just as forcible to say, 'Why should the soul die?' as 'Why should it not die?'

So, then, there is nothing, says Mill, unscientific in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, but neither is that proved.

Lastly, as to REVELATION—the revelation concerning God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The same line is adopted.

If you could prove, says Mill, that there had been such a revelation there is nothing in it impossible, or improbable, or unscientific. If you assume that God is, that He is good, that He is loving, that He means good to man, all which things are not impossible—and there is nothing unscientific at all in supposing that He has made a special manifestation and revelation of Himself and His purposes to man. And then occurs one of those characteristic passages about Jesus Christ which betray the innate tenderness and piety of John Stuart Mill, his deep spiritual sensibility as well as his morbid fear of giving any undue weight to feeling, or mere intuition, tradition or authority.

This is what Mill says about Jesus Christ :—

About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor, even now, would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life.

It is the God Incarnate, more than the God of the Jews or of nature, Who, being idealised, has taken so great and salutary a hold on the modern mind. And whatever else is taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left, a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, and may have inserted all the miracles which He is reputed to have wrought. But who among His disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee, or certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less the Early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived, as they always professed that it was derived, from the higher source.

To this we add that, to the conception of the rational sceptic, it remains a possibility that Christ actually was what He supposed Himself to be man—charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue.*

Dear friends, I do not want you to leave this church to-night with any feeble grasp upon those fundamental truths which we sum up in the words God, Immortality, Revelation through Christ, the Soul of man. All these central and recurrent beliefs which ring through the ages may still be yours and mine. I do not want you to leave this church to-night with the paralysing "perhaps" written above them all! I want to point out in a few words why I think you may translate this probability into a *working certainty*, this devout hope into a *living faith*.

Religion must rest on a working certainty. It is not only the hope that is full of immortality, but it is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Faith, not hope, is your light: it is intended to be by the constitution of your nature your guiding star through the labyrinthine difficulties of this world.

I define faith thus. It is not an imbecile credulity—a childish belief in whatever is told you—a belief without evidence or without reason; but a cogent reliance on proper evidence "commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," says Paul; be infinitely reasonable; "be ready to give a reason for the faith that is in you to everyone that asks you." Be sure that the faith which Christ inspired, commended itself as a certain thing to those who heard him. So it was with Paul.

I define faith thus. "Faith is a loving trust founded upon a reasonable belief, which, taken in connection with the constitution

of human nature and the experience of life, amounts to a working certainty."

Let us sum up. I have shown you what John Stuart Mill considers solid matter and force out of which arise forms of successively higher development.

He considers it possible and probable that there is a God, that He is all-wise and loving, although not omnipotent in the literal sense. He considers that since all this is probable it is also probable that we are His fellow-workers, and are expected to act like Him in struggling with intractable evil in man, in matter, in spirit, in nature.

Further, we have seen that Mill thinks miracles and Divine interpositions are not unscientific, but simply not proven.

That the immortality of the soul and the revelation of God in Christ are not in themselves unscientific, but also not proven.

And now let me tell you why I think we may for ourselves translate these devout hopes, these inspiring probabilities, into something like moral certainties, and instead of going through the world with hope, we may also go through the world with religious faith.

Here is the first reason. You may, and you must, *rationaly believe a good many things that you cannot scientifically prove*. I have often said in this pulpit that there exists commonly a belief in an outward world of which there is no scientific proof whatever. All that you can prove is that you have certain ideas and impressions; you have no proof whatever that there is an outward world except that you cannot help believing it. And there are a number of other things in nature and human nature, like the persistence of force, the moral scale, &c., which you must believe, although you cannot scientifically prove.

And why must you believe these things? What is the test of a truth which you cannot scientifically prove?

This is the test, that when you accept it, it arranges all the other facts that you know. The thing is true if it coincides with all other things which you know to be true. I will put it more cautiously. An hypothesis or a supposition is true which *best* arranges the largest number of facts and conflicts with the fewest. And the reason why humanity has believed in God, has believed that He is good, and wise, and intelligent; the reason why humanity has believed that man has a soul, that he is able to communicate with God through that soul, mind to mind, spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost; the reason why man believes that God has made a special manifestation of Himself in Jesus Christ, giving us the ideal of a human life by unveiling the moral attributes of Deity under the limitations of humanity, is because when he believes these things they arrange the constitution of nature for him, they explain to him his own being, they help him to progress, they help him to win the battle of good over evil; they draw him nigh to something above and beyond himself, which is, nevertheless, not very far from any one of us, which is about our path and about our bed, spying out all our ways.

That is the reason why you may believe in God, although He is not proved; in the soul, although it is not proved; in Christ as the manifestation of the Deity, although it is not proved; the immortality of the soul, although it is not proved; simply because when you believe these things they arrange for you a larger number of human facts, reconcile the facts of your nature, and explain your best thoughts and noblest aspirations better than anything else.

That brings me to my last point. I will not now dwell upon my own convictions as against Mill's that we have many sure evidences of the existence of a spiritual world, of the existence of something like Divine interposition of the existence of abnormal and miraculous phenomena running through all secular and sacred history. But I will say that what draws me most closely to the belief in an invisible world and enables me to have such a strong measure of faith as I own to in God and the soul, and sustains me in fighting the battle of truth against lies and of good against evil, is this, and that I believe that not the mind working upon the facts of physical nature, or even its power of analysing itself—but that mind in *conscious communion with other mind* should be our talisman in religion. For I hold that mind in nature can only be discerned by mind in man.

I believe if God ever speaks to man His speech can only be interpreted by the soul of man. Only soul reads soul, only soul interprets soul. You know that is so between you and your fellow creatures. Only those who are in sympathy can understand each other. And if that is true, as between man and man,

* *Essays on Religion*, p. 255.

it is true as between God and man. God is a spirit, and when He speaks only the spiritual ear of man can hear His voice; and, believe me, the reason why people go on believing in religion at all in one form or another—the *rationale* of all your churches and chapels—is this, that such a belief is deeply involved in the constitution of man's nature, and that nothing will ever be any real substitute for it.

You may put in its place the love of your country, or the love of humanity, or any other ideal object, like the pursuit and adoration of science and art, and so forth, but in the long run the heart and the flesh will end by crying out for the living God, the sovereign lover and ruler of the universe, if not the absolutely and literally Omnipotent, yet the All-good, the All-wise, the All-loving.

And belief in this remains, and ever must remain, the great revelation from the mighty Over-soul to the travelling soul of man.

It is ever thus in prayer and in the highest communion, the Alone to the alone; and no one comes between—in the last analysis there is always open vision.

God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

Whilst we are here all kinds of mists will arise, all kinds of confusion will result from the varieties in the human mind, and forms of religion will change and alter accordingly.

You may not have the religion that you had when you were a young man; the religion of the young man is not the same as the religion of a little child; the religion of one age is not the same as the religion of another as far as forms go. But the central verities variously aimed at and apprehended remain constant. Just as the sun in Heaven looks very different on different days and to different eyes. Sometimes clouds are between us; sometimes there appears no sun at all; and sometimes it is dark, deep night. But wait a little, and the glow will stream over the eastern hills; the clouds shall roll away and we shall see that behind the clouds the sun is still shining.

That is what I believe concerning God and our apprehension of Him.

We change, but He does not change. "In Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

He reigns above, He reigns alone,
Systems burn out, and leave His throne,
Fair mists of seraphs rise and fall
Around Him changeless amidst all,
Ancient of Days, Whose days go on.

It is to that God, All-wise, All-good, All-loving, Who comes forth Himself to justify Himself to you, to me, to every man, even the Light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; it is to that God Who holds all things in the hollow of His hand, and Who gives to the spirits of all flesh a measure of His own life as each is able to receive it, that I commend you to-night, telling you that your reason and your science may lead you some way in the direction of a living faith, such a way as shall be sufficient to show you that these, the glorious truths of the life eternal, are neither absurd, nor impossible, nor improbable, but that certainty alone can come to you through the revelation of God Himself to your inmost soul, giving you the spirit of a son whereby you cry, Abba, Father.

OFTEN all that a man wants in order to accomplish something that it is good for him to do is the encouragement of another man's sympathy. What Bacon says the voice of the man is to the dog—the encouragement of a higher nature—each man can in a lesser degree afford his neighbour; for a man receives the suggestions of another mind with somewhat of the respect and courtesy with which he would greet a higher nature.—ARTHUR HELPS.

He could condense his creed into a shibboleth which enabled him to make a clear, clean division between the friends of Christianity and its foes, and assign a place to each man, without hesitation, in one camp or the other. This coarse-grained sort of belief is safe from being disturbed by doubts or progressive discoveries, and therefore is attractive to others as a sort of anchorage in an age of controversy. Men like a theologian who hates and loves in the lump, who condemns or applauds, without a moment's diffidence, and without reserve or qualification,—who measures every assertion by some patent meter of truth which requires neither acumen nor labour to apply. D. Wilson had deep impetuous feelings, and partly in consequence of them, an intellect too blunt to be harassed by philosophical distinctions; and therefore he was popular with the mass of uneducated women and busy men, to whom the excitement of the emotions is pleasant and the labour of the intellect irksome.—A *Saturday Reviewer* in 1860.

EXTRAORDINARY PHENOMENA.

We extract from the *Harbinger of Light* (Melbourne) the subjoined translation from an Italian journal. The circumstantial account, beyond which we know nothing, is worth attention:—

The *Luz*, of Rome, publishes a narrative of some remarkable physical manifestations, which have been obtained at Naples through the mediumship of Eusapia Paladino, by Dr. Chiaia, of that city, in the presence of Signor Tassi, of Perugia, Professors De Cintus and Capuano, Signor Verdinois, a well-known man of letters, and Professor Don Manuel Otero Acevedo, a pronounced sceptic, who had come all the way from Madrid, in Spain, for the purpose of investigating the "incredible" phenomena. These, it should be mentioned, took place in a room of the hotel in which the Spanish professor was staying, and the control announced himself to be our old friend, John King, who expressed himself as feeling especially pleased to assist in opening the eyes of so confirmed a materialist as Professor Acevedo to the existence of a spiritual world.

After the medium had passed into a state of trance, instead of speaking in her ordinary Neapolitan *patois*, she began to converse in the purest Italian, and asked the gentlemen sitting next to her to take hold of her hands and feet, which they did; when she immediately rose in the air as lightly as a feather, and floated towards the centre of the small table, about 2ft. 6in. by 1ft. 3in. in size, upon which she then stood. John King was then asked if she could be raised above the table; and this was promptly performed, so that the whole of the sitters passed their hands between her feet and the table. Her body was then laid by spiritual agency in a horizontal position, the shoulders resting on the edge of the table, and the lower portion of it rigidly maintaining its position in space without any support whatever.

At a second sitting, in the full light of the gas, the same phenomena were repeated, with the head only resting on the edge of the table, and the whole body resting on air, for full five minutes. Not only so, but as if by magic, a bolster was mysteriously conveyed from an adjoining room and placed under the head of the medium without contact by human hands. The gas was presently extinguished, and pale blue flames were seen to issue from her body, rise into the air, and break up into three or four smaller jets of light.

An American gentleman who was present, laying his watch on the table, asked John King if he could illuminate its face so as to show the hour and minute. This was done, and the watch then rose in the air and returned to the table. "Could you lift it up to the ceiling?" inquired its owner. No sooner said than done, not once, but repeatedly, and the chain was rattled against the ceiling.

Finally, the Professor covered a vase full of soft clay, prepared for the purpose, with a handkerchief, and defied the control to produce upon a given portion of it the impression of three human fingers. To his amazement, the result was effected, and he quitted Naples convinced of the reality and genuineness of the phenomena, but obstinately bent upon denying their spiritual origin. "A man convinced against his will remains of the same opinion still."

It is a noteworthy sign of the times that a distinguished ecclesiastic of the Church of Rome, Monsignor Giacompo Bernado, has proposed to the Royal Institute of Science, Literature, and Arts, that Spiritualism shall be the theme of its next prize essay, and that this proposition has been acquiesced in by that body. It is also in contemplation to institute a scientific investigation of the phenomena. May we not exclaim with Galileo, "Eppure si muove!"

A number of copies of "LIGHT," chiefly last year's issue, are at the disposal of any society that cares for them. Application (personal) with name and address to be made at 21, Birchington-road, N.W.

I AM told, said Cavour, that we are violating a principle; to tell you the plain truth, I believe that great phrases and grand maxims have often and often been the cause of a country's ruin. I respect great principles as much as anyone. I hold that they should never be violated, but there is all the difference in the world between abstract principles and their practical application. In the system of the universe there are two orders of things utterly distinct from each other—the order of principles and the order of facts. A close and indissoluble bond unites these two orders without identifying them. No real principle can exist except by virtue of some fact on which it is based; no fact can be accomplished without entailing an inevitable result on some principle.—DICEY'S *Life of Cavour*, p. 47.

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Light:

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TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

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MR. HAWEIS ON JOHN STUART MILL.

We publish to-day a discourse on Mill by a preacher who has the popular ear, and who, also, has the courage of his convictions. Perhaps no two men could be put together who have so little in common as these two. If there be any common bond it must be a love of truth and a desire to brush away all obstacles to attaining it. John Stuart Mill had educated himself in a stern school. He was nothing if not logical. He reasoned out his beliefs, and was, as little as possible, emotional or intuitional. He, of all men, could give a reason for the faith that was in him. He knew what he believed and why he believed it. He had accustomed himself to look facts in the face, which very few people do, and no man could give a more direct and clear account of what he saw and felt and thought.

There is this community of thought between Mill and his critic. They neither of them cared one jot or one tittle for popular opinion. Mill, in a celebrated passage, which we have always held to be a splendid utterance, informed someone who had ventured to tell him what God would do with him unless he mended his ways and his manners,—“It may be” (he said in effect) “that there is such a God as you describe. It may be that He can send me to the hell of which you seem to know so much. Very well, to hell I will go.” It was a very worthy utterance. John Stuart Mill did something to break down the old bad creation made in the image of man—and not the best man—whom people called God.

Perhaps the best service that Mill rendered in his day and generation was that he accustomed his fellows to the habit of thought. It is remarkable to consider how many people get through life without ever thinking at all. Baldly put this seems a truism. But it is literally true. How many of us take things as they come, and never think about them at all! How few of us take the simplest acts of our daily lives and think what they mean! Much of our life is merely automatic. We go through the ordinary details of existence without any thought. We sometimes manage to discharge these automatic duties while the conscious intelligence is doing something wholly different. This is the experience of most of us who have paid any heed to ourselves and our actions. The debt we owe to Mill is most accurately measured by the statement that he taught us to think.

Nor is there any man in the ranks of the great thinkers who did more for us in this way. Not Carlyle, though he revealed to us much that a less clairvoyant mind would have failed to show. Not Herbert Spencer, though the world owes him much. Not the poets, alive or dead. Not Thackeray nor Dickens, though we decline to put a value on the indebtedness of the race to these giants. No: John Stuart Mill was a man who, in his own sphere and in his own way, did much for his generation and those who have succeeded it.

It is, perhaps, worth while to ponder what this remarkable man meant by religion. Mr. Haweis tells us that “this is an age of unsettled religious opinion.” We are glad to hear it. The sooner some of the religious opinions familiar to our youth are unsettled the better. Mr. Haweis tells us confidentially that he has had many religious difficulties, and he has not “cleared them all up”; and he makes a brave confession that he has gained much from those with whom he, on the whole, disagrees. There we are wholly in accord. If people would leave alone the points of agreement, and endeavour to see things as others see them, what a world of education would be open to them! It was the special dignity of John Stuart Mill’s character that he lived above the petty prejudices of man’s lower life, in a purer and serener air than most of us reach. “The Saint of the Liberal party” Mr. Gladstone called him. He was much more deserving of the appellation than many who have been canonised in due form and order.

Mill’s religion consisted, we think, principally in a direct way of facing truth, in a steady realisation of the great fact that all man’s life—even the least acts of it—is important; and that there is in this poor world much injustice and wrongdoing caused by man’s foolishness and thoughtlessness. He had grasped and taught the theory of development, the outgrowth of a man’s higher self from the lower surroundings which nurtured it. The difficulties that he put so forcibly are, we suppose, inseparable from our present state of being, wherein the Finite attempts to comprehend the Infinite. It should not be any derogation from the greatest mind that the tiniest and simplest problem of life is to it insoluble. It is when man’s mind poses as the solver of these problems that he becomes a fit object of contempt. Natural modesty, and a beseeching confession of ignorance, are suitable and becoming raiment. Mill turned on to religious topics that dry light of logic which is usually so little employed in handling such matters. It is not necessary to agree with him in order to be grateful to him. It is not necessary to think with Mr. Haweis that the gospel according to Mill was sad, to reject it and refuse it. We want life and movement where we have so long had stagnation. And we do not care to look too closely at the angel that troubles the waters that have so long been devoid of life.

SUBTLE CONDITIONS.

On Friday evening, February 14th, Professor J. A. Fleming, lecturing at the Royal Institution on “Problems in the Physics of an Electric Lamp,” said, “So delicate, so refined are the conditions under which the electric current will act for producing a light which we now so much need for practical purposes, that they have driven scientific work to more and always increasing accuracy.” And in a series of very delicate experiments, some of which failed, even with all the care taken for their production, this was illustrated.

If these conditions necessary to success are so very delicate and so easily upset, even when such a force as electricity is dealt with, it is not surprising that spiritual manifestations require for success even more care than is necessary for electrical power to be manifested.

Yet some of those persons who have claimed to be scientific, and have attended séances with the intention of

investigating, have wilfully set themselves to act in direct opposition to those conditions, which the experienced explained were necessary in order that results should occur.

How easy it would be to thwart all the electric experiments of a delicate character attempted by a lecturer and then to assert that by this careful proceeding the lecturer could not perform his "tricks." When, however, similar proceedings are adopted in connection with spiritual phenomena, the blundering investigator not unusually claims for himself very great acuteness.

THE GIFT OF D. D. HOME.*

The Gift of D. D. Home is an appendix to *D. D. Home: His Life and Mission*. In this volume we hear much more of the "mission," and the world at large is scolded, not always in a very dignified way, because it did not come forward to respond to the "mission." It is, no doubt, greatly to be desired that people with name and position should come boldly forward and testify to what they have seen and heard. But the experience of reasoning men shows that unwelcome and new truths have to fight their way into acceptance in the teeth of opposition and hostility, and even of reticence on the part of those who have much to lose by identifying themselves in public with an unpopular subject. It is further to be considered that to the subject they could lend little aid, though they might force it into a passing notoriety, and to themselves and their families they might conceivably do much harm. We have never believed in this forcing, and we dissent altogether from Madame Home's reiterated complaints of the reticence of many eminent persons which pervade the volume before us. It is more dignified and more practical to accept the logic of facts, and to recognise the plain truth that not every man can afford to risk what is involved in open adherence to a cause which he can hardly benefit by the public use of his name.

The pervading complaint of this book thus disposed of, the facts remain of permanent interest. We meet in Madame Home's pages a number of distinguished men. Mr. Buckle was greatly impressed by a single séance, which was all that he had at Mrs. Milner Gibson's house. "A development of some new force well worth scientific investigation," was his opinion.

Sir Edwin Arnold is mentioned as having sat with Home, "in addition to his inquiries into the dubious powers of mediums whose 'spirits' could never be persuaded to face the light": a sample of many remarks that deface the pages of this volume. Sir Edwin's pronouncement to the Dialectical Society is one from which he has not materially changed since.

The statement to which I am prepared to attach my name is this: that, conjoined with the rubbish of much ignorance and some deplorable folly and fraud, there is a body of well-established facts, beyond denial and outside any philosophical explanation; which facts promise to open a new world of human inquiry and experience, are in the highest degree interesting, and tend to elevate ideas of the continuity of life, and to reconcile, perhaps, the materialist and metaphysician.

Mr. Ruskin is also claimed as a convert—that, says Madame Home, is "certainly my own impression"—but those who have known that eminent but eccentric man will be aware that the claim is invalid. Mr. Ruskin saw something which impressed him, but the irritable condition of his brain rendered it unadvisable for him to pursue an exciting subject.

Lady Mount Temple, Lady Jocelyn, and Lady Londonderry are all accused in the same prickly fashion of having got what they could out of Home and of keeping silence afterwards. We strongly believe, from a knowledge of the lady first mentioned, that what is untrue as regards her is

* *The Gift of D. D. Home*. By MADAME HOME. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. 1890.)

equally untrue as regards others mentioned. Mr. S. C. Hall also falls in for his share of vituperation. Poor dear old man! He wrote and spoke enough, surely. We should not have said that reticence was his foible.

Next comes E. L. Blanchard, who "does not seem to have recorded any of the numerous manifestations that he witnessed"; and Dr. Robert Chambers, who did "honourably come forward to bear testimony on behalf of his friend." And then Charles Dickens, who published "some of the most ignorant and foolish attacks ever directed against Spiritualism." And next Mr. Hamilton Aidé, and Mr. Grant, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, and Mr. Lowe, of the *Critic*, who "intruded himself on the spirits about the same time as Mr. Grant." Lord Lytton, "in public an investigator, in private a believer," is described as having his "imagination coloured by superstitions derived from the mediæval and mystical authors in whom he delighted."

When we turn to America the same dominant note pursues us; but there is apparently in the free air of that free Republic more testimony than is found in this old country. The year 1855 brings us back to England, and the acidulated spirit of this volume is evidenced by the first sentence. "The farthing candles of the world of mind (i.e., the *Saturday Review*) have always had a great contempt for the stars" (i.e., D. D. Home). Incidentally it is stated, and it is news to us, that Carlyle was persuaded to read Swedenborg, and remarked afterwards, "Never, until now, did I comprehend how great a prophet has been among mankind." If that be true, it raises our opinion of Carlyle. Dr. George Wyld is represented as saying, "The only difference betwixt myself and the usual Spiritualist is that the ordinary Spiritualist believes that these phenomena are produced by the power of the spirits of departed individuals; I believe that they are produced by the spirits of the living individuals present." This also is news to us. Does Dr. Wyld still so believe?

It would be as tedious to pursue this subject as it is to read the perpetual grumble in every page of this book. When people do not speak they are scolded; when, as in Dr. Gully's case, they do, their record is "minute and prolix." And yet, scattered up and down through this volume, we find records valuable in themselves of the phenomena which occurred in Mr. D. D. Home's presence and in that of thousands of attesting witnesses. While we are jealous for the fair fame of the many mediums whom Mr. Home in his *Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism* ignored, we have no sort of disposition to minimise his own great powers, or to cast a single shadow on the great work to which his life was devoted. It is well that these two volumes should have been compiled. All scraps of evidence are of value, and there are many recorded in the volume under review. If we could have wished that it were less acrimonious in tone, if we could have welcomed a more generous view of human nature than pervades it, we are not the less alive to the value of the facts that find record in its pages.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

Our readers are reminded that Mr. E. Dawson Rogers will address the next Assembly of the London Spiritualist Alliance at 2, Duke-street, on "Perplexities." The meeting is on March 11th, and we bespeak a full room.

MR. ROBINSON desires to say on the subject of "Lyceums and Sunday Schools," that his object has been gained in having drawn attention to the matter, while space will not permit a detailed reply to his critics. Mr. J. W. Burrell, who advocates Lyceums, is asked to open them on Sunday mornings for religious training. Mr. Robinson is in accord with Mr. Morell Theobald on the subject of Spiritualism and Religion. He recommends Lyceum managers to study that gentleman's views. Mr. Dale is begged to excuse Mr. Robinson from calling to see him. Time does not permit.

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO DR. ANNA KINGSFORD.

Steinway Hall was on Saturday afternoon last filled to overflowing with an audience assembled to show their affection and veneration for the late Mrs. Kingsford, and their sympathy with her work. The programme consisted of instrumental music by Mr. Leslie Smith, singing by Madame Antoinette Sterling, the reading by Mr. George Chainey of Mrs. Kingsford's appropriate and exquisite hymn, "The Communion of Souls," and a lecture, also by Mr. Chainey, illustrated by selections from *The Perfect Way* and *Clothed with the Sun*. Mr. C. C. Massey, who presided, prefaced the proceedings by a short address, expressing his satisfaction at being privileged to take part in the celebration of one so deservedly honoured and lamented, and giving a succinct exposition of the peculiar claims of Mrs. Kingsford's writings to such recognition. True, he said, those writings are what are called mystical, and the term is usually held to denote what is obscure and confused. But the only reason for this is that it relates to a region in man's nature of which people have but dim and confused ideas, the region which, being interior, spiritual, and of the soul, escapes the cognition of those who restrict their observation to the exterior, material, and phenomenal. But for those who succeed in coming into such relations with the soul as to be cognisant of its reality, its nature, and its history, the term "mystical" ceases to imply what is obscure or confused, and denotes knowledges which are perfectly clear and coherent. It was her ability to do this, and, having obtained such knowledges, to formulate them in language correspondingly luminous and logical, that so pre-eminently distinguished Anna Kingsford. She had effected a relation between the things of the soul and the faculties of the mind such as enabled her to interpret the profoundest mysteries of religion—which necessarily has its seat in the soul—and thus to relate faith to understanding. Mr. Chainey then said: "We have met here for the commemoration of a person and promotion of a cause. The person is the late Anna Kingsford, of whose departure this is the second anniversary; and the cause is the new gospel of interpretation divinely given through her instrumentality. To define her work as recognised far and wide by the most advanced souls of our generation, it was nothing less than the interpretation of the Scriptures of the past, and an invaluable contribution to the formulation of the Scriptures of the future." His own title to be spokesman on this occasion, the lecturer said, was due, not to any personal acquaintance with Mrs. Kingsford, but to the fact that he had for some years past recognised the supreme value of her teachings and devoted himself to their diffusion. For this purpose he had traversed the continent of America and the Pacific Ocean, founding schools in California, Australia, and New Zealand; and he could testify abundantly of his own experience to their beneficent effects upon the characters and lives of numbers. He then read several testimonies to their value, among which was the following from the author of *Morgenröthe*,—the Rev. John Pulsford—a work which indicated its writer as a soul of rare maturity. "I cannot tell you with what thankfulness and joy I have read *Clothed with the Sun*. It is impossible for a spiritually intelligent reader to doubt that these teachings were received from within the astral veil. They are full of the concentrated and compact wisdom of the holy Heavens and of God. If Christians knew their own religion, they would find in these priceless records our Lord Christ and His vital process abundantly illustrated and confirmed. The regret is that so few will be able to be aware of the tithe of its pearls. But that such communications are possible, and are permitted to be given to the world, is a sign, and a most promising sign, of our age." It was to interpret the age, the lecturer continued, that he had come to Europe. He had been impelled in dreams and visions to visit the scene of the childhood of Joan of Arc, and to set forth the history of the miraculous deliverance which, under Divine guidance, she had wrought for France in the very darkest hour of its national history, together with the equally miraculous deliverance which, under Divine guidance, Anna Kingsford had wrought for Christendom and the world in the darkest hour of their spiritual history. For the first time in history the recognised intellect of the age had definitively pronounced against the very idea of God, the soul, and moral responsibility; and the churches were dead and powerless to enlighten. In mystical symbolism, the soul and its intuitional faculty are denoted by the term "woman." And the two women he had thus associated were, for the modern world, typical representatives of the soul

and intuition. This was the keynote of the lecture. It consisted of a parallel drawn between the characters, histories, and achievements of Joan of Arc as a national deliverer and of Anna Kingsford as a spiritual deliverer, each alike being under Divine guidance, the speaker's fervid eloquence and genuine enthusiasm riveting the attention of his audience for the full hour that he occupied. We are unable to give a longer report, but understand that the lecture will be given at length in *Psyche*.

We must not omit the tribute due to Mr. Leslie Smith, who presided at the piano. This young artiste's exquisite rendering of Chopin's "Fantasie Impromptu" deserves the highest praise. Madame Antoinette Sterling telegraphed her inability to be present.

PLANCHETTE-WRITING.

The following narrative we extract from the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research. It is recorded by a man well known to Spiritualists—Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood:—

My experience in planchette-writing has been mainly acquired in sittings with two sisters, whom I will call Mrs. R. and Mrs. V., of whom the younger, Mrs. V., has far the stronger influence in producing the writing. With her the board in general begins to move much sooner and in a more vivacious way than with her elder sister. When the two sit together the board moves rapidly along, like a person writing as fast as he can drive, while with me and one of the sisters the action is often feeble and labouring. But neither of the sisters can obtain anything whatever when they sit by themselves. The board remains absolutely motionless under the hands of the solitary operator.

When trying for writing we sit opposite each other at a small table, I with my right hand, my partner with her left on the planchette, while the writing produced is upright to me, and upside down to my partner, from whom, however, the effective influence seems to proceed. The precise nature of that influence is not very easy to understand, and is, I think, very commonly misapprehended. Writing by planchette is often called "automatic," and the pencil is conceived as being worked by the muscular action of the sitters, under the guidance of a blind impulse, as little understood by them as the finished result is foreseen by a pair of birds instinctively engaged in the construction of their first nest. But this is directly opposed to the experience of myself and my partners. When I am sitting at planchette with one of them, I know that I am merely following the movement of the board with my hand, and not in any way guiding it, my only difficulty being to avoid interfering with it. It seems to me exactly as if my partner, in whom I have perfect confidence, was purposely moving the board and I allowing my hand to follow her action, interfering with it as little as possible. And she gives to me an exactly corresponding account of her own share in the operation. Thus we give to the outside world our united testimony to a fact which, as far as each of us is concerned, lies within our own direct knowledge, viz., that the writing traced out by the pencil is not produced by the muscular exertion of either of us.

We have, then, in planchette-writing, if our account is to be believed, the manifestation of an agency invisible to us, yet capable of moving the bodily pencil either in mere scribbling or in such a way as to fix an intelligent message on the paper.

The December number of the *Journal* contains a narrative of a sitting at planchette where Mrs. R. and I received information of facts in the life of Colonel Gurwood which we were quite certain had never been known either to us or to the only other person who was present at our sitting.

On December 4th last I had a sitting with Mrs. R. and her sister, which afforded evidence not less decisive of the intervention of an intelligence cognisant of matters of which we had no intimation.

Not long after my arrival on a visit to Mrs. R., mention was made of a mysterious breakage of a thick washhand-basin which had taken place on the previous Sunday, closely resembling other breakages which had occurred in the house from time to time in a like unaccountable manner. On one occasion a water bottle was seen to explode on the dressing-table when no one was near it. On the Sunday in question Mr. R. and his sister-in-law, Mrs. V., were in the breakfast-room directly under Mrs. R.'s bedroom, Mrs. R. with the children in the drawing-

room, and the servants at supper in the kitchen, when Mr. R. and Mrs. V. were startled by a loud crash in the room above them. Mrs. V. immediately ran in to her sister in the drawing-room and they went together upstairs to see what had happened. They found the thick washhand-basin in fragments on the floor; the larger pieces in front of the washstand, but quantities of smaller fragments scattered over the floor to a distance (as I estimated) of five or six feet, in a way that could not possibly have been produced by a mere fall on the carpeted floor: the basin must have been dashed down with great violence.

While talking of these matters I sat down to planchette with my hostess and her sister, and Mr. R., coming into the room and hearing what we were talking about, said that some half an hour ago he had heard a noise in the breakfast-room for which he could not account in any way. It sounded like the lid of the metal coal-box slamming down, but the box had been already closed, and, besides, the noise seemed to come from the other side of the room. Soon afterwards he said that his presence always seemed to interfere with planchette-writing, and he left the room. Mrs. R. and I had begun sitting, but planchette suggested a change, and Mrs. V. and I had our hands on the board.

Planchette: "If Mr. Wedgwood will ask I will try to answer."

I asked what was the crash Mr. R. had just heard.

Planchette: "Noise from upstairs made by spirits with material object."

"Was it in the room above?"

Planchette: "Yes."

"What was it?"

Planchette: "Mrs. R. will find out."

Mrs. R. accordingly went upstairs to look, and while she was away something was said as to the probability of my witnessing some similar display.

Planchette: "Not yet—you see the better class of spirits war against the smashing fraternity."

Mrs. R. could find nothing out of order, and returned saying she had looked everywhere.

Planchette: "No, you did not."

Mrs. R.: "Whereabouts am I to look, for I can see nothing?"

Planchette: "Wash—" (an illegible scribble) "that side of the room."

We asked, "Were you trying to write washstand?"

Planchette: "Yes."

Mrs. R. went up again, and, meeting with no better success, came down for more specific instructions where to look.

Planchette: "Slop-jar" (written very large).

Mrs. R., laughing, said she hoped that was not smashed, and went up for the third time. She found the slop-jar in its usual place by the washstand, and when she came to look closely into it, found the water-glass lying broken all to bits in the bottom. She had not removed it from its usual place on the top of the canteen since morning, from whence it had apparently been lifted off and dropped into the empty slop-jar from a height sufficient to cause the crash heard in the room below.

Mrs. R. brought us down the jar to show how completely the glass was smashed.

We then asked, "Was this done by the same spirit who broke the basin?"

Planchette: "The same adverse influence; not the same spirit, but influence."

THE DIVINING ROD.

The "divining rod" as a means of finding a good supply of water has (writes a correspondent) stood a very successful test at Oundle, in Northamptonshire. Mr. W. Todd, a landowner in the town, requiring a well on a portion of his property, sent for a "diviner," a man named Pearson. Considerable difficulty has recently been experienced in the town in finding a water supply, and the Oundle Commissioners have just spent £83 in experimental borings, conducted by a water engineer, for a water supply for the town. They proved utterly futile, and it was this fact probably that induced Mr. Todd to adopt a different mode of procedure. In the presence of a number of spectators drawn together by the novelty of the experiment Mr. Pearson, with the usual V-shaped hazel twig, walked over the estate. In several places the twig was visibly agitated, but the "diviner" kept on until in one spot the twig almost bent itself double in his hands. At this place the man indicated with considerable confidence that a good supply of water would be found. A well was accordingly sunk, with the result that at a depth of seventeen feet a copious supply of water was reached. In a few minutes it rose fourteen feet in the well, and at this height it has remained since.

JOTTINGS.

Truth is horrified. Archdeacon Sheringham told to "an astonished congregation" at Gloucester Cathedral recently the following natural story:—

A clergyman, who lived in the North of England, stated that he was called up late at night to go and visit a sick woman, and in crossing a lonely moor by himself he was suddenly seized as if with paralysis. He prayed to God, and his strength and nerves returned, upon which he proceeded on his journey and saw the sick woman, and then returned home. About two years afterwards he was sent for to see a man on his dying bed. On going, the man told him he had a confession to make, and asked him if he remembered going across the moor late at night to visit the sick woman. The clergyman replied that he did. The dying man then continued: "Sir, I had a grudge against you, and I lay in wait that night on the moor to murder you, but I was prevented from doing so because I saw someone walking by your side."

Whereupon Truth wants to know whether the Society for Psychical Research has a branch at Gloucester, evidently believing that such a society may be trusted to suppress any such stuff. The Society for Psychical Research may be congratulated on Truth's estimate of its final cause.

Mr. Auberon Herbert is about to establish a *Liberty News-paper*—a weekly penny journal—"to resist the continual encroachments of Government, either central or local, upon the free judgment and free action of men and women." It will be such an organ of opinion as we have not yet seen, encouraging liberty of opinion and action in every way, and recording amongst other things "the growth of Spiritualism and Theosophy, and of such other movements as seem to us to affect deeply our knowledge of what man is." Such a paper is wanted, and it could not be in better hands.

There has appeared in London a certain mysterious French Count whose mission is to illustrate mechanically the power of the human will. His apparatus is thus described:—

Upon a reel is wound a length of silver wire, measuring 75,000 metres. Two magnetic needles crossing each other in a contrary direction are fixed upon the reel, and suspended by a slender thread. The apparatus works under glass, like a watch, so that no tampering with the mechanism is possible. It is mounted, moreover, on a high stand. The Count takes his hold of the two conductors, to which are attached the two ends of the silver thread rolled upon the reel, and bids you order the machine to move to right or left, according to your will. Under this power alone, hitherto misunderstood or underrated—this, the mightiest power in the universe, according to Count P., the power of the Human Will—the machine will act without the contact of touch. To right or to left will the reel revolve, according to the fancy of the visitor. Without speech, without touch, by the mere mental influence alone, will the machine move in obedience to the unexpressed command. But not in all cases does the machine answer unreservedly. It is to the powerful will alone—the concentrated and fixed determination that it can be made to reply.

It is stated that the Count has been converted from Materialism "to the highest degree of religious faith, to conviction of the lofty destinies of man, and his connection with Divinity," and all this apparently because he reproduces experiments very familiar to Spiritualists.

Our Quaker correspondent, Charles Fox, of Cardiff, has been delivering a lecture on "The Symbolism of the Great Pyramid" at Falmouth. He regards it as having been erected "by Divine power almost, certainly by Divine Wisdom, or by Inspiration—a Stone Bible and a marvellous testimony from Antiquity to Christianity for this age."

Flashes of perception into the future come to many of us. A correspondent of the *Daily News* records the following:—

When Prince Amadeo returned from Spain, in 1873, his wife in his presence presented to the Philippine Fathers a white silk mantle, in which she had wrapped her new-born infant during the journey, and desired that it should be used for some sacred purpose. "We will use it to carry over the Host," said one of the friars. "Yes," added the Duke of Aosta, "and you will use it when you bring the viaticum to me." The sacred baldachin was made, but never used. When the sad moment arrived in which the viaticum was to be carried to the dying Duke one of the Philippine Fathers recollected the words pronounced in 1873, and fetched the baldachin. Under it the Host was actually carried to the Cisterna Palace.

Woman has an "Eerie Story" by C. J. Wills, one of the type that now furnishes forth the stock-in-trade of most ephemeral literature. The story is good of its kind, and testifies to the interest so widely spread in our subject.

Woman, the only penny paper devoted to woman's interests, is distinctly good in matter and form.

We welcome a new journal, *The Circle*, admirably got up and full of worthy contents. It is devoted to the interests of the "Brotherhood of Love and Labour." Our sometime correspondent, "Dum Spiro Spero," is not unconnected with the venture, to which we wish all success. It is published by the Editor at 7, College-street, Nottingham. We have placed it on our table at 2, Duke-street.

The *Phrenological Magazine* (L. N. Fowler, Ludgate-circus) for February is a good number. We may instance one article on "Is Man a Unity, a Duality, or a Trinity?" as worth special attention. Mr. Coates gives us some "Practical Phrenology" and much sound sense.

The *Spiritualists' Lyceum Magazine* for February may be recommended as a study to our many correspondents who write us on the subject of Sunday-schools and Lyceums. It is, we presume, an authoritative exponent of the Lyceum method.

Psychic Studies (San Francisco) for February reproduces from a book, *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, words which it commends as those of "one of the clearest and most highly cultured writers on the subject of Spiritualism." The extract is well chosen and we are glad that notice should be drawn to it. The remainder of the publication is devoted to psychometry and to professional mediumship. The latter article, in view of what our columns contain, is very opportune. The little tractate lies on our table at Duke-street.

The current number of the White Cross Library deals with "Faith: or, Being Led of the Spirits." Each reader will make of it what he can. It is not of universal application.

The Editor of the new *University Extension Journal* asks of us a brief notice of the first number. We are not aware that it appeals to our readers, but any effort to spread knowledge has our hearty commendation. It is a monthly (price 1d.), and is published by W. B. Whittingham and Co. at 44, Charterhouse-square, E.C.

The *Harbinger of Light* (January) records from *Luz* (Rome) some remarkable phenomena. Dr. Chiaia is the recorder, Eusapia Paladino the medium. We give fuller particulars elsewhere. The manifestations were extraordinary.

Our contemporary reprints our Bibliography of Spiritualism, and has some kind words of appreciation of the work that has been done in the past by our Editor, a sentence of which we permit ourselves to quote only to show the kind feeling that exists at the Antipodes towards one whom the writer has never seen in the flesh and probably never will see:—"We know of no man living who has done such large and solid work for rational and enlightened Spiritualism as the gentleman we are referring to, and most sincerely trust that some of the many who sympathise with and admire his work will be practical about it, and not let him be hampered for lack of means to sustain the physical basis of the very important spiritual work he is engaged in."

We are almost ashamed to quote our kind friend's words; but they are so far true that all we can do is measured by means. We are thankful that means are forthcoming, and we will try to deserve the generous confidence placed in us.

The *Golden Gate* records some remarkable manifestations which have occurred in the presence of Daisy Robinson, a coloured servant, about twelve years of age, at Sumter, U.S.A. A policeman who was charged to investigate gives testimony to the movement and breakage of various articles of crockery. He saw them actually leave the place on which they stood, "sail through the air," and break in fragments on the floor. The girl's aunt testifies that while the girl was eating her breakfast "the bedstead in her room was actually wrenched to pieces by an unseen power."

The same journal gives an account of occurrences at Brady Station (Va.), U.S.A. On the plantation of John W. Brooks has taken place since last September that mysterious stone-throwing of which so many instances are recorded in the history of Spiritualism. The stones apparently came through the window, but the glass was not broken; they fell frequently during five

months, were warm in temperature, some as large as hen's eggs. On one occasion the children were pulling walnuts; their mother called them to the house, and they left the walnuts under the tree. "Not ten minutes after they entered the walnuts came flying in through the open door, and fell on the floor in a shower."

From the *Carrier Dove*, quoted from the Stockton *Evening Mail*, which had the honesty to admit a rejoinder from a Spiritualist to a wholesale charge of fraud and imposture *apropos* of the Fox confession recently. It is perfectly true:—

Of all people there are none so well posted as are Spiritualists themselves in all the tricks and shams that counterfeit the real phenomena, and there are none who take half the pains to ferret out and expose the infamous frauds that are continually preying upon a credulous community. Their task is no sooner done in exposing one fraud than another springs up in some other quarter demanding their attention, and between exposing them and warning and guarding "fresh" investigators from imposition they are kept from getting rusty.

Judge Nelson Cross has felt it necessary to retire from further active work in the American Spiritualist Alliance. He was an original member, and rendered marked service to the Society first as its treasurer and then, for some years, as its President. The Alliance, by a unanimous vote, placed on record its sense of his great services.

The living are the only dead;
The dead live—never more to die;
And often, when we mourn them fled,
They never were so nigh.

The joys we lose are but forecast,
And we shall find them all once more;
We look behind us for the past,
But lo! 'tis all before!

The *Progressive Thinker* (Chicago, U.S.A.), in its look round of its exchanges, arrives at the conclusion that "LIGHT" is an excellent paper. We are happy to return the compliment.

Hypnotism in ancient days:—

And as she spake
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.

Tennyson, in "The Holy Grail."

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* transfers to its columns our remarks on Mr. J. Hawkins Simpson's "Reproduction of Sounds through or by an Entranced Medium" as "full of thought-breeding and wise suggestion." We are indebted to our contemporary for additional circulation given to opinions which we hold as reasonable and probably true. The more men ponder such subjects the more we shall be likely to know where we are.

We have not heard much lately of the Rev. Joseph Cook, Boston's pulpit pyrotechnist. He burnt his fingers badly in letting off a firework against Spiritualism, and he has been nursing them ever since. Lately he has occupied Henry Ward Beecher's place, and seems to have been inspired by the surroundings. At any rate, he offered the following incidents, among others, as demonstration of a future life:—

Louisa May Alcott, watching with her mother by the deathbed of a dying and dearly loved sister, says, when the end came, she distinctly saw a delicate mist rising from the dead body. Her mother, too, saw this strange thing. When they asked the physician about it he said, "You saw life departing visibly from the physical form." This was at Concord, remember, where there is no superstition.

Professor Hitchcock says he was present at the bedside of a dying friend. The eyes closed; the last breath ceased; he was dead. Suddenly the eyes opened, light came back to them, then a look of surprise, admiration, inexpressible bliss; then suddenly passed away.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the preface to a book on visions, says, with all a scientist's conservatism, that once, watching by a deathbed, the impression was conveyed to him that something—that is the word he used—passed from the body into space.

Mr. J. J. Owen's *Fragments* is a book of 260 pp., containing selections from notes contributed to the *Golden Gate*. We have more than once contemplated a selection from the "Notes by the Way" that have appeared in "LIGHT." But we have hesitated from a consideration of the difficulty of finding a suitable string on which to thread the stray beads.

The same thought strikes us as we read Mr. Owen's book. Each little paragraph is good and worthy, containing some

thought that is worth preserving. But the general impression is of a snippety and incoherent mass. It is not a book that can be read: it is one that may be taken up and opened anywhere.

The *Review of Reviews* notices the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, and is evidently puzzled by Mr. Myers's stories. Mr. Stead cannot understand a post-hypnotic suggestion from beyond the tomb, where there has been no hypnotism to start with.

The same *Review* gives us an extract from the *Forum* in which Dr. Charcot describes his method. Mr. Stead is again scared by Dr. Charcot's statement that it is possible "for the mind to impress upon a blank sheet of paper a picture visible only to the eye of the hypnotised person," an idea on which he will act. This, he opines, "if followed up may lead us far." It may.

From *Harper's Magazine* we learn that Edison is a dreamer, as might be expected. But he is also a worker of the most portentous type. Once he gets an idea he worries at it till it is proved false or has assumed concrete shape. He never wanders from the object in view, and frequently spends week after week in his laboratory, never losing touch with his idea till all is over.

"The man who dwelt for a brief half century in the personality named Honoré de Balzac." I raise my hat, *Lucifer*; that is a very neat way of putting it.

EDISON'S CONCEPTION OF MATTER.

From *The Review of Reviews*.

Edison is much given to dreaming, and his scientific imagination is constantly at work.

One day at dinner he suddenly spoke, as if out of a deep reverie, saying what a great thing it would be if a man could have all the component atoms of himself under complete control, detachable and adjustable at will. "For instance," he explained, "then I could say to one particular atom in me—call it atom No. 4,329—'Go and be part of a rose for a while.' All the atoms could be sent off to become parts of different minerals, plants, and other substances. Then, if by just pressing a little push button they could be called together again, they would bring back their experiences while they were parts of those different substances, and I should have the benefit of the knowledge."

The above remark about the atoms, too, recalls a statement which he once made to me regarding his conception of matter. "I do not believe," he said, "that matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence. Look at the thousand ways in which atoms of hydrogen combine with those of other elements, forming the most diverse substances. Do you mean to say that they do this without intelligence? Atoms in harmonious and useful relation assume beautiful or interesting shapes and colours, or give forth a pleasant perfume, as if expressing their satisfaction. In sickness, death, decomposition, or filth, the disagreement of the component atoms immediately makes itself felt by bad odours. Finally they combine in man, who represents the total intelligence of all the atoms."

"But where does this intelligence come from originally?" I asked.

"From some Power greater than ourselves."

"Do you believe, then, in an intelligent Creator, a personal God?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Edison. "The existence of such a God can, to my mind, almost be proved from chemistry."

Lucifer, we are glad to see, sets itself to snub and suppress the very foolish person who has somehow or other been allowed to edit the *Theosophist* during Colonel Olcott's absence. We are promised that the Editor, "having fortunately reached Adyar, will put an end at once" to what never ought to have been printed at all. Let us hope so. The acting Editor has acted quite sufficiently, and should be promptly snuffed out.

SUCH is the power of action! Man stands either aloof from, or above, all theories, but his actions become part of himself. There is that in an action to which we give ourselves up in spite of our better knowledge that rises above our heads like a mist, blinds the eye, and, penetrating the consciousness through innumerable delicate pores, at length completely envelopes it.—

ALEXANDER KNOX.

NOTES FROM MY SPIRITUAL DIARY.

By F. J. THEOBALD.

PART V.

WORK IN THE SPIRIT-LAND AND ITS CLOSE CONNECTION WITH THIS WORLD.

We here are all interested in the temporal matters of our loved ones, as well as in their spiritual progress. Be sure we do enjoy seeing you as free from anxiety as it may be, but, when sorrows and troubles arise, we know so well that the Father permits it all in love for the good of His earthly child. . . . I am glad I came here! I wish I could impress upon you the real grandeur of our homes here, and of the spiritual atmosphere in which we live. I wish I could get at you more freely, but, in spite of hindrances, I can and do live in your very sphere, and do my best to guide and guard you and all I love so dearly.

The surroundings of my home are most lovely. I have all I wish for. Mountain scenery in the distant horizon. Lakes and running streams of living water, reflecting the most exquisite hues.

My home is full of flowers, of musical instruments of every kind, upon which I take my part, and we have grand concerts. We think and talk of you, be sure.

It is true that all our small actions on your earth influence the growth of the spirit and the formation of our homes here. How I wish all could know the vast importance of resisting evil and unloving feelings. If all would strive to live in harmony and love! It calms the spiritual atmosphere, and we can reach you so much easier.

Each one has to be brought out of these faults and prepared and purified for the higher regions in the Spirit-home, before they can be reached. Live in love—that is as a talisman to the development of, and entrance into the Christ-life. . . .

Ask any question you like. We all see your desire to help us to converse. I feel the difficulty myself, for we are very distinctly on different planes of life.

You, still in the prison of the body,—I, outside that prison, and with no wish to return. But I see now both sides and rejoice!

Giving thanks to our Heavenly Father for all His Infinite mercies, both temporal and spiritual.

Whilst you are in the body, undoubtedly the temporal *must* hold strong sway; it must of necessity claim a great deal of your thought, but it is the lesson all have to learn in your life—to be in the world but not of it; to let the temporal blend with the spiritual, so that the one may be blessed by the very mingling of the two. It is very difficult to say this in the right way, but, as whilst in the body the business of life must be seen to, be very sure there is a sanctity in temporal matters as in spiritual. It is a part of the earthly discipline to let one purify the other, to strengthen the spiritual by the so-called muscular Christian development, which will blend sound common sense with ethereal matters of the spirit.

How limited these expressions are! Do you see what I mean? or will you question me, to help me to tell you clearly all I wish to? If I speak of my Spirit-home, I can but use your earthly words, and oh, how poor they are! I want language of the Spirit, of the essence of the Divine, to express all. Thus I can but give you a glimpse, a small rift in the veil which lies between the mortal in fleshly garb and the spirit freed from that.

Trust, pure and child-like, is the one needful thing to enable any Christian to face the anxieties of earth. This is a never failing comfort, and this I do strive to help you to attain.

FRESH ARRIVALS IN THE SPIRIT-HOME.

We have had a large arrival in our Spirit-home. Your dear old friend J.B. comes to see us. He is a pure, true spirit, always anxious to be doing good and to help others. He came to see us, because he knew us all, through you. He is faithfully attached to you all, and is now rejoicing in the realisation of his dreams of the Spirit-home. I tell you this as a message from him.

Then there is a dear, gentle, creature. She says you used to call her "Gussy." She is so loving, so glad to be here. She is more by your mother than anybody, as yet, but she tells me she has many loved ones here, and some she has left on earth to whom she is very closely drawn. She is as yet in

a sort of half-bewildered state. Not very clear as to whether she is in the body or out of it. She talks to us of you all, and brings us details of little events which we do not seem to be able to get at.

[Some weeks after this message had been given to me, I received a few particulars of the last illness of this dear spirit, "Gussy." They are especially interesting, as throwing light upon what my young relative tells about her being "in a sort of half-dazed, bewildered state." "Gussy" had suffered from heart disease for some long time. A fortnight before she passed away she became unconscious for several hours, and on recovery declared that she had died. With the greatest difficulty she was at length persuaded that she was still in the body, upon which she wept bitterly, and was grievously disappointed.

Thus we can well understand that, when she was at length freed from her body, she would "feel bewildered," and not very clear as to whether she was in the body or out of it! Also, as her daughter told me in this letter, for weeks before passing away she was continually talking of my mother, to whom she had always been devotedly attached. "Gussy" had lived with us as nursery governess, and ultimately, being left a friendless orphan, had been adopted as a daughter by my father and mother. Hence her natural delight to join our circle on her first arrival in Spirit-land.]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"Great Names."

SIR,—For the reason that I am always fearful of stirring up a spirit of strife where peace and harmony should alone reign, I very rarely answer a dissentient letter upon a subject on which I have written; my only object in writing being the endeavour to present spiritual truths in their purest and highest light, and having done that, I am quite content to abide by criticism without answering it, knowing that truth must in the end prevail, on whichever side it lies.

My only motive, therefore, for noticing the letter on "Great Names," in your last issue, signed "E.M.," is to correct the assumption contained in it, which I confess drew a smile from me, that because "E.M.'s" views differed from mine, therefore I was writing upon a subject I had not well studied!

Will you, therefore, allow me to state, for the benefit of your readers, that not only have I for years deeply studied the subject of my letter headed "Great Names" in your issue of the 15th ult., but that my letter is the carefully considered outcome of those studies.

That "E.M.'s" views on the subject should differ from mine is inevitable, as we start from a totally different foundation, "The Personality or otherwise of our Lord."

But I take my stand upon that foundation upon which all sects of Christians are agreed; and having endeavoured to express my views clearly, and with *due previous study*, on the possibility of the manifestation to us of high spirits from that standpoint, I now take leave of the subject, confidently leaving the result to the judgment of your readers.

"LILY."

Wanted, a Chart of the Land beyond the Grave.

SIR,—We are all naturally anxious to know as much as possible about a country to which we are bound. I venture, therefore, to ask your readers to say something about that world to which we may any day be called. Many of them, in dreams, trances, or through spirit communication, must have received information concerning it. If this information were to be imparted it would tend to make us realise more vividly an existence not of this earth, would help to spiritualise us and encourage us to press forward. We are some of us still apt to think too vaguely of a future life, not to feel it as an actuality. It would also be interesting to compare the accounts given and see in what particulars they agree. Some of the following questions might be answered:—

Are spirits always surrounded by a visible and tangible world?

Is their environment always the result of their own state?

Are they sometimes made aware of the size and shape of an object by some other sense than sight? (This appears to me to be probable, as a dream has been told me in which this happened to the dreamer.)

Are things in the spirit-world so entirely different from what they are here, so new (colours and forms, for instance) as to be quite indescribable?

Is the mode of consciousness there so entirely different as to be inconceivable to us at present? In what does the difference consist?

What happens to a good person immediately after death, what to a bad, and what to one in whom good and evil are about equally mixed?

It would be especially interesting to compare notes on this last question. Many more might be asked, but some may easily suggest themselves, and any particulars would be helpful.

G. R. S.

"Exploration of Lives."

SIR,—I have read the article with the above title with much interest, as well on account of the subject-matter of the article as on account of the light it appears to throw on the character of such communications generally. An expression in the first paragraph indeed seems to me to be the key-note of the whole. The author says that this "exploration" is gathered from "amongst the many interesting and instructive experiences of spirit-life which I and some of my friends have been privileged to enjoy through the pure and beautifully expressive mediumship of the late Miss Godfrey." If the term "beautifully expressive" is used here in any other sense than that of mere rhetoric—and it does seem to be otherwise used—it points to the necessity of great care being exercised as to the meaning of the "communication." "Beautifully expressive" may, of course, be applied to the style of expression, but it may also mean the pleasure given to the hearers by the beautiful expressions, and this seems to be the case. The "exploration" is, in the first place, almost absolutely material, and, in the second place, being material, it is a reflex of pictures and statements which might very well have been impressed on the memory of the medium and have been unconsciously reproduced by her.

First as to the materiality of the facts narrated:—"We were told that these trials had been going on for several days, and would continue for about a fortnight of our time. They occur regularly at certain periods." The judges are described as sitting on tiers of seats, and there is "down on the plain a place barred off from the rest with a passage up to where the judges sit." The criminals are of a low earthly type, a murderer, a poacher, two silly girls, a harridan, a rather unpleasant betting man, who got forty years, when he was to be turned loose again; a Miss Braddon villain, and a speculator. What is this but a glorified assize, occurring periodically, with the dock, the judges, the time sentence, and the "next case" all complete? Only the judges seem to be a little less wise than their terrestrial brethren. It is true there is a "panorama"—very real and life-like—of the accidents in the various defendants'—one can hardly call them prisoners—lives, but this only adds to the grotesqueness, not to the spirituality of the narrative. The woman who puts "something like water in her husband's medicine glass" is shown in the panorama as at first a "little child with other children, cross and spiteful, kicking, striking, and biting," and she is now shown "how the evil in her nature first took root when she might have checked or prevented it." One would have expected these lofty judges to say something about how the evil got into the "nature" of the child, whatever that may mean, and to have determined accordingly. Perhaps, however, the judge did do so, for after a rather heavy criminal record—she threw a bottle at her husband before she poisoned him—she is allowed to go away with an angel! But the male murderer, who was not half so bad as the woman,—he began by "playing truant, and fighting other boys in a large town"—is taken away "restrained by chains: they say, being a murderer, he must be chained." Why didn't they chain the woman?

Surely this is all materiality, and very poor materiality; the panoramas of life, the beautiful pleading angels, make nothing in favour of a pseudo-spirituality in which there is scarcely a word which expresses "selfishness," not one syllable which points to the "working out of one's own salvation." There is nothing but the old story of repentance, and—all will be well. It may be true "that the false teaching in the Churches respecting the future life and repentance after death has a great influence in retarding the reformation of those who have led sinful lives," but for the propagation of evil here there can be no surer way than to teach that a very easy repentance after death will bring about comfort and peace. About the worst punishment inflicted was that passed on a speculator who was sent back to the earth to try and counteract the misery he had brought upon others.

Next, there is nothing to indicate the spiritual nature of the "communication," in fact, everything in it points the other way.

There is the usual "goody" notion as to wickedness, the naughty boy who would fight, the usual catalogue of sins, "gambling, betting, race-courses, public-houses, swearing and drinking." The wicked man who stabs his rival and then puts his body in a lime-pit has to carry about the effigy of his victim with the knife—surely that knife or dagger we have heard of before—while the murdered rival and the girl for whom the murder was committed are living together in peace! But throughout the whole "communication" there is nothing which might not well be the outcome of a somewhat jumbled reproduction from the medium's unconscious memory of police-court reports—note the remarkable expression, "they put him on the stand"—and of speculations she had read or heard. The "panoramas" of past lives, however impressive the idea of them may be, have nothing new about them.

These remarks are made with the full conviction that the writer of the article on "the exploration of lives" has an honest conviction that he has given the world a "communication" from the world of spirit, and it is that very honesty of purpose that makes the position one of considerable importance. A "communication" which gravely asserts that a fortnightly court of first instance, not easily distinguishable from the courts of the world we know, is held regularly in the next state of existence ought to be received with caution and examined with exceeding care. And if there is nothing in it which cannot be explained by unconscious memory, then the spiritual nature of that communication should at once be denied. I therefore should refuse to accept the spiritual origin of this story of the exploration of lives. There is no assertion of allegorical teaching, no insistence as to the necessity of modifying spiritual instruction to suit our limited intelligence. We are told simply and boldly that this exploration is "of periodical occurrence in the spirit-world." There is one very remarkable passage in the narrative which indeed may throw some light on the whole story. Mr. Grant appears to have been surrounded by many spirits of ancient days at this time, October 21st, 1888, and they remained "about us all the week in order to witness these judgments now to be described." "About us" is suggestive in the extreme, for the judgment was therefore invisible to them without the aid of the medium; and *who*, indeed, were "they"?

As one to whom spiritual life is the only life, I am jealous lest, by any mistaken interpretation of phenomena, that spiritual life should be misinterpreted or travestied. That is why I write this letter.

π.

Antecedent Existence.

SIR,—Although I cannot see with Mr. Clayton that if the spirit does not exist before the body it must be the result of the body, I am entirely with him in demurring to the teaching on this subject conveyed to us through Mr. Morse. It is inexplicable to me that the enlightened philosopher who has for so many years given us such lucid and practical explanations of things spiritual should persist in maintaining that the soul has no antecedent existence to the birth of the body. He declares that, contact with matter being a necessity for the individualising of consciousness, that contact must be obtained before commencing to be through birth on earth, but that, individuality once established by the act of birth, it is not destroyed by immediate departure from the world of flesh to the world of spirit, where, indeed, the newly-born being can be reared as well, if not better, than it would have been had it been allowed to continue its earthly career. Knowing this to be the teaching of Tien Sien, at one of his meetings I put this question to him: "If a spirit deprived of earth experience through dying in infancy can be educated and developed in the spiritual world, thereby showing that objective existence is not an absolute necessity, why could we not all be spared the pain and trouble of undergoing it?" The answer was: "One must begin somewhere; if one begins in the spiritual world you will have to remember that beginning, wherever it is, is always associated with ignorance, weakness, and incompetence. You cannot reasonably expect that a spirit born into existence for the first time would be one whit wiser, one whit stronger, if born in the spiritual world than it would be if born in this. He would be an infant, weak, incompetent, because competence, strength, and knowledge are dependent upon observation, experience, reflection. That is one position we place before you. The real and definite answer would be that the physical law of contact with matter is a necessity for the individualising of consciousness, however much you may lament the trials of your present stage of life. The law being that contact with matter precedes development of consciousness,

you must come in contact with it before you commence to be. It is quite true you can be trained and educated: thousands, millions we might say, enter the spiritual world as children or infants, but that does not destroy their individuality, instituted by previous existence in this world as children or infants; while, in this condition of existence, the pleasures of parentage which precede and follow the institution of each individuality are among the strongest and dearest experiences that belong to every well regulated and properly conducted life."

According to this theory, a soul suddenly gaining immortality through birth is by no means obliged, in order to develop its faculties, to remain on earth and suffer the rough treatment that it usually bestows upon the majority of its children. Is not all this wrong? for is it not the truth that the soul has existed from all eternity, although in a latent, unconscious state? The Materialists say that what has had a beginning can have an end, but the soul has had no beginning and will never have an end; and is it not a truth that life on earth is not an absolute necessity for us? I should like, sir, to ask you one more question. May not the denial on the part of a spirit of pre-existence be explained by supposing that he, like a mortal, may be obsessed by a fixed idea as ineradicable as erroneous? For example, it seems impossible to make a gentleman called John Hampden see that this earth of ours is not a flat surface, which he persistently maintains it to be, or Professor Huxley that spirit raps are made otherwise than by the foot. When will Tien Sien acknowledge that body and soul are not a simultaneous creation?

J. H. G.

Spiritualism at Adelaide.

SIR,—I was considerably amused on reading the report, in your issue of December 7th, of Mr. Morell Theobald's lecture, "Gleanings Abroad," as another example of the false impressions globe-trotters get of things.

As Mr. Theobald was only a few hours in South Australian waters, and was never within six miles of our city, his description of Adelaide Spiritualists must have been a revelation from some of the spiritual workers in his home circle.

As one who knows something of our local Spiritualists, I should like to inform Mr. Theobald that they consist, as elsewhere, of men of various minds; some Christians, some Deists, some Agnostics, some soft enough to swallow without question the marvellous narrative contained in Mr. Theobald's book that he mentions so often, and others who refuse to accept anything until it has passed the test of their reason.

His remarks about Mr. A. W. Dobbie are as grotesque, though not so far from the truth, as what he says about our Spiritualists.

Adelaide.

EDWARD A. D. OPIE.

January 13th, 1890.

Haunting.

SIR,—I send a statement of facts in connection with apparitions which, perhaps, may be acceptable, as the narrator from whom I heard them is personally acquainted with the two individuals who have had the undermentioned experiences, and who related them to her.

About two years ago a lady, living in a house in my immediate neighbourhood with her husband and children, died very suddenly. It was believed she had intentionally poisoned herself. Soon after her death the widower, his children, and servants left the house and neighbourhood to reside elsewhere; and the house remained uninhabited for nearly two years, after which time new tenants entered into possession, a gentleman and his wife, who before long were troubled by strange and startlingly unpleasant experiences, such as sometimes hearing the sound of light swift footsteps along a passage leading to and beyond the door of their room, without any visible cause for the sounds. Also, the gentleman, while sitting reading, suddenly felt a cold wave of air, and on raising his eyes from his book saw the apparition of "a little dark woman"; while his wife, sitting working, "felt a small cold hand laid on her arm." Neither of them had ever seen the lady who died in the house, nor had they any idea of her personal appearance or peculiarities. They only knew the fact of her death in the house, yet the gentleman's description of a *little dark woman*, the mention of a *small* hand, and the quick light footsteps were her peculiarities, as the narrator, from her personal acquaintance with her, can testify.

D. L'H.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance.—DR. JOHNSON.

SOCIETY WORK.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum was opened with singing and invocation, followed by musical reading, "On the Other Side"; silver chain recitation, "Be Kind to Each Other"; marching and calisthenics, reading from *Spiritualism for the Young*, and recitations by Arthur G. White, Lizzie and Hetty Mason.—C. WHITE.

STRATFORD SOCIETY, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—The following is the list of speakers for March:—March 2nd, Mr. Butcher at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 9th, Miss Keeves at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 16th, Mr. Walker at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 23rd, Mrs. W. Stanley at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 30th, open meeting 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.—M. A. BEWLEY, Sec.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—Another very pleasant evening was spent here on Sunday with Miss Marsh, the announcement of this lady's name being sufficient to ensure a crowded meeting. The audience, which was composed chiefly of sceptics, exhibited much surprise at the ease and accuracy with which their spiritual surroundings were described. Sunday next at 7 p.m., open meeting.—C.

LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' FEDERATION.—The representatives of the Federation will, with other speakers, occupy the platform at Chepstow Hall, High-street, Peckham, on Sunday evening next, at 6.30 p.m. prompt. This being the opening meeting of the Peckham Society at their new hall, it is hoped that a large audience will be present.—U. W. GODDARD, Federation Secretary, 295, Lavender Hill, S.W.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—On Sunday morning last, at Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate, a paper was read by Mr. Pursey, entitled "Spiritual Gifts and Material Phenomena." In the evening the hall was filled with an intelligent audience to hear the able lecturer, Mr. William Whitley, on "Theosophy and Occult Buddhism." Mr. Whitley is a staunch defender of Spiritualism. Mr. Drake occupied the chair. Several questions were answered in a very interesting and satisfactory manner. We trust Mr. Whitley will again favour us at a not far distant date. By some misunderstanding no Lyceum was held, which we sincerely regret. More interest ought to be shown by the association members. Next Sunday morning at eleven, Mr. Earl; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Miss Marsh, clairvoyante.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—A new Society. Messrs. Copley, Waters, Parker, and Audy, late trustees of the South London Spiritualists' Society have, after careful consideration, resigned and withdrawn from that Society. It is intended to continue the Sunday meetings at Winchester Hall as a separate and distinct Society, instituted for the purpose of public worship on Spiritualistic principles on as broad a basis as possible: The first meeting of the new Society will be held on Sunday, March 2nd, when Mrs. Stanley, Mr. R. J. Lees, and other speakers will take part in the proceedings. Services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Spiritualists in sympathy with such a movement are invited to give their support.—J. T. AUDY, Provisional Secretary.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD, N.—Mr. Battell's paper upon "Religious Reformers" was postponed until next Sunday morning, owing to that gentleman's indisposition. Mr. Mackenzie gave a brief address upon "Theosophy and Spiritualism," showing the chief points of agreement and difference between the two systems of thought. Mr. S. Rodger regretted that Spiritualists and Theosophists were so apt to quarrel, as they held much in common, especially in regard to the development of psychic powers. Mr. Sells supported the Spiritualistic theory. Messrs. Vogt, Bernstein, and several others continued the discussion. In the evening Mr. R. Wortley read and commented upon a communication received through his own mediumship, purporting to come from a clergyman who had died through excessive drinking. Next Sunday evening Mr. T. Emms will take our platform, subject: "What are the Demands of Spiritualism?"—S. T. RODGER.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET.—On Sunday last after singing, prayer, and the reading of a short article on the Life of Mollie Fancher, Mr. Towns devoted the evening to psychometrical readings, which were wonderfully successful. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., reading from the Life of Mollie Fancher and comments; the evening, in the absence of Mr. Everitt, will be devoted to the consideration of Spiritualism, on the testimony of its believers, at 7 p.m. Monday, social gathering as usual; Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Busy Bees, "Word and Work"; Wednesday, at eight, séance; Friday, 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m., for conversation and sale of literature. Mr. Everitt will be with us at Harcourt-street on March 16th, and will give some of his experiences with different mediums. We shall be very glad of visits from friends at our Tuesday's "Word and Work"; no collection. Next Sunday a meeting of subscribers and friends will be held to re-constitute the association, and it is hoped all interested in this work will be present.—J. M. DALE.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday next (March 2nd) we hold our first services in our new hall, and hope at 11.15 and 6.30 to welcome a large attendance of members and friends.

Several prominent speakers and mediums have promised to be with us. The Lyceum will meet at 3 p.m.—On Thursday last our members met, and some rumours, very rife of late, were investigated. It was unanimously agreed that there had been no misappropriation of funds, and ultimately it was resolved: "That we continue the trust hitherto reposed in our secretary and have every confidence in him." To this resolution there were only six dissentients out of thirty-seven members present, and while it is to be regretted that personalities have been introduced, yet it is far better that they should be publicly discussed than privately circulated. The cause will undoubtedly benefit by this, as already a second meeting place for Peckham is announced. On Sunday last, Mr. J. Hopcroft was with us, at both meetings.—W. E. LONG, 79, Bird-in-Bush-road, S.E.

THE WONDERFUL LAND.

BY MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND.

There's a wonderful land with gardens fair,
And mansions many, and treasures rare;
But man never delved in the garden ground,
And the mansions uprise with never a sound,
And the treasures are not of misers' gold,
Nor of aught that in markets is bought and sold;
And that land is not lighted by sun or moon,
For it has not a midnight, and has not a noon!

We journey there often, but do not need
A beautiful, bright-eyed, bounding steed,
Or its grim successor, the treacherous slave
Which carries us fleetly o'er land and wave
With a puff and a snort, and a feather-like breath,
And a horrible power over life and death;
But softly we pass by a potent spell
To the wonderful land we know so well.

It is DREAMLAND I picture! But not only there
Are the beautiful mansions and gardens fair;
Dark caverns and ruins it also shows,
And mystical terrors, and heart-crushing woes,
And sometimes I think that our souls may be brought
To the Land of Dreams, to be nurtured and taught
By the same Omnipotent Lord Who deigned
To teach men in dreams when the Pharaohs reigned!

FAITH AND FACT.

There is no gleam of glory gone,
For those who read in Nature's Book,
No lack of triumph in their look
Who stand in Her Eternal Dawn.
Friends of a failing Faith! while your
Lighthouses of eternal life
Hold tremulous lamps, across the strife,
That die and darken hour by hour;
And higher climb the waves that drench;
And on the rocks the breakers roar;
While Light for you opens no new door;
And higher climb the waves that quench,—
While Heaven-scalars in the dust
Sit, with their hopes dead or disowned;
Their splendid dreams all shivered round,
And broken every reed of trust,—
While timid souls that sail the sea
Of Time are fearful lest yon band
Of Cloud should not be solid Land,
To step on for Eternity,—
And faint hearts flutter 'twixt a nest
That is not sealed to wind and wet
And one that is not ready yet,
With wandering wings, and find no rest.—
There is no gleam of glory gone
For those who read in Nature's Book;
No lack of triumph in their look,
Who live in her Eternal Dawn!

—GERALD MASSEY, in *My Lyrical Life*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor makes an urgent appeal to correspondents to write clearly, punctuate carefully, or not at all, and to spare him the necessity of perusing copy that needs often to be entirely rewritten. Such MSS., having regard to the press of matter now sent to "LIGHT," will fail to secure insertion. His time does not suffice for the work of preparing for the press MSS. which simple care would suffice to present in due form for the printer.

A. J. H.—Thank you. No good can come of such a discussion.
N. S.—We fear that no good would come of any such attempt as you contemplate. There is, so far as we know, no possibility of turning the spirit-world into a sort of body of detectives. It would seem to be very desirable that crime should be detected, and that men should learn that even their most secret deeds leave traces behind them. But we can only accept what comes to us, and we have no power of origination, or very little.